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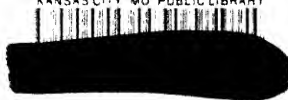
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Education  
and the Promise of America



# Education and the Promise of America

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## EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

DURING THE PRESENT PERIOD of unusual flux and flow of social forces, it is appropriate to pause for an analysis and evaluation of our society as it appears in troubled transition, and to formulate an educational philosophy and program adapted to changing conditions.

In this, the seventeenth volume of the Kappa Delta Pi Lecture Series, the author critically re-examines our fundamental traditions and envisages their future modification and refinement in terms of the emerging technological, humanistic and industrialized age. For this task he is eminently prepared both by his studies of sociological and philosophical foundations of education over a long period, and by his active participation in the activities of groups concerned with problems deriving from our current social evolution.

Dr. Counts bases his position firmly on the inclusive, democratic, American tradition—a tradition which is growing, not static; which is a heritage, not an heirloom; which is worthy to be cherished and treasured as it lives and grows. It is one to be im-

proved and refined in terms of present and emerging technological, scientific, humanistic, and social forces. The author envisions America's great educational promise which can be fulfilled under the inspiration of great purposes. To this end the major portion of his discussion is directed.

His philosophy is at once inclusive and democratic, individual and social, the latter increasingly assuming greater relative importance. It is a philosophy not of drift but of creative direction. To him education implies enlarged horizons; a program for a society of free, equal, co-operative men; an enduring civilization of increasing beauty and grandeur in which all men have equality of opportunity.

The book is conceived largely and expresses supreme faith in education as a primary means for attaining our national aspirations. It can reach its aims only if educational aims and philosophy are chosen in terms of the society America wishes to have.

The author's fervid, thoughtful, and thought-provoking plea for a great invigorated education, adapted to the American scene and motivated by great purposes, merits the careful attention of serious students of education.

E. I. F. WILLIAMS

EDITOR OF KAPPA DELTA PI PUBLICATIONS

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

AS I FINISH THIS LECTURE I am keenly aware of its limitations and weaknesses. I realize fully that it is a very feeble treatment of a great theme—the theme that education always expresses a conception of civilization and that our education should express a great conception of our civilization in its historical and world setting. I trust that this effort will stimulate others, better qualified, to attempt the task.

My obligations in the preparation of the lecture are very great. First of all I am indebted to our two most profound students of American democracy and civilization and the two greatest teachers of my generation, Charles A. Beard and John Dewey. My indebtedness to them is not diminished by the fact that probably neither would endorse everything contained in this volume. I am under a particularly heavy obligation to Professor Beard. He read the manuscript with care and gave me many invaluable suggestions.

I am much indebted to my colleagues at Teachers College. I would mention especially Dean William F. Russell, who has lent me every encouragement through the years and has influenced greatly my



thought on the theme of this lecture. Also I would mention Dr. Hollis L. Caswell, Executive Officer of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, for assistance of many kinds. But above all I would mention the members of a committee of the Institute with whom I have been working during the past year on the social bases of education: Miss Tompsie Baxter, Miss Elmina R. Lucke, and Dr. Frederick J. Rex. Much of their thought has gone into this volume. I know I am greatly indebted too to Dr. John L. Childs with whom I have worked most intimately for many years. For the heading of Chapter I, I have used the title of Mr. Herbert Agar's distinguished and inspiring volume, *A Time for Greatness*.

Finally, I am indebted to Kappa Delta Pi for the stimulation to put my thoughts in written form and for the opportunity to present those thoughts to a large and distinguished body of educational leaders.

GEORGE S. COUNTS

New York City

November 13, 1944

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# I

## A TIME FOR GREATNESS

### I

A BACKWARD LOOK. Three hundred years ago little bands of brave men and women from the Old World settled along the Atlantic coast of North America. To reach this coast they abandoned friends and relatives, bid farewell forever to the land of their fathers and mothers, crossed the forbidding waters of a vast ocean, and faced the real and imaginary terrors of the unknown. On their arrival they found themselves in a strange and untamed country—a country of unfamiliar climate, of deadly diseases, of primeval forests, of savages and wild beasts. They and those who came after them subdued a continent, built a unique civilization and carved out of the wilderness a new home for themselves and their children.

A hundred and sixty years ago these people severed with the sword the political ties binding them to the mother country. Under great and inspired leader-

ship they proclaimed and won independence, conducted a successful revolution, forged a union of thirteen separate states, and brought forth a "new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Although the founders of the American republic were marching in a grand tradition of human freedom stemming from remote antiquity, at the time they launched the experiment in popular government most educated men had little faith in either the intelligence or the virtue of the common people. Even their friends beyond the Atlantic feared that the experiment would end in disaster.

Eighty years ago the expected disaster seemed to overtake them. Arising out of sectional rivalries sharpened by the institution of Negro slavery, always an occasion for apology and always a violation of their deepest professions, one of the bitterest and bloodiest civil wars of history rocked the republic to its foundations and threatened the destruction of the entire experiment in popular government. Again under great and inspired leadership they weathered the storm and demonstrated that a nation conceived and dedicated as theirs was could endure. And so down through the remaining decades of the nineteenth century and on into the first decades of the twentieth the American republic confounded its ene-

mies, completed the conquest of the continent, and became the mightiest nation of the earth.

2

A TIME OF DEEP TROUBLE. Today, in spite of our power, we in America are moving through deeply troubled times. Once again our experiment in human freedom and popular rule faces possible disaster. We can by no means be certain that it will endure to the end of the present century. We only know that as yet we have failed to meet or even to sense fully the challenge of the present crisis and the strange new world that is unfolding under our eyes. As in other troubled times in our history, we are in need of great and inspired leadership. Even more, we are in need of general competence of the highest order in the basic arts of self-government, economy, and daily living.

Our generation has experienced and witnessed a succession of bitter disappointments and terrible calamities. In our youth we crossed the oceans and fought a great war on foreign soil under the proclaimed purposes of democracy and peace. We gave our blood to overthrow ancient despotisms, only to see new and more brutal despotisms rise out of the ruins of the old. We assisted in laying the founda-

tions of a world order to adjust differences among the nations, only to see the fires of conflict rekindled on a vaster and more awful scale. We helped to build an economy capable of banishing poverty and ushering in an age of plenty, only to see our fabulous productive energies paralyzed with resulting misery and insecurity to millions. In later years we watched helplessly, as if under an hypnotic spell, the growth and spread of a movement that, obviously and professedly, was to plunge the entire world into the valley of the shadow of death and place in gravest peril everything for which good men and women have toiled and struggled down through the ages. We in our generation participated in the release of social forces which we were never able to understand. We have witnessed more revolutions and counter-revolutions than any other generation in history.

As we look back now we know that the crisis of the military struggle is past, that we are entering the concluding phases of the war, that the cause of human freedom is saved for the moment, that we shall have another chance to build a better world. But we must never forget that again and again during the terrible years through which we have just passed we have escaped utter catastrophe only by the narrowest of margins. In that black summer of 1940, when the lights of reason and freedom seemed all but extin-

guished throughout the Old World, we were saved by the indomitable courage and faith of the people of Britain; in the autumn of 1942 we were saved again by the matchless heroism and tenacity of the Russians at Stalingrad and on the Caucasian steppes; during the long years from 1937 we were saved by the unarmed valor of the Chinese; and throughout the seemingly hopeless days, months and years of Axis success we were saved by those silent millions of the underground—that multitude of nameless men, women, and even children who were ready to suffer starvation, torture, and death in order that the tradition of human freedom and dignity might not perish from the earth. The toil and agony, the sweat, blood, and tears of these many peoples must have watered the tree of liberty and enriched the heritage of mankind down to the last generation.

We in America can be proud too that before and after the incident that will “live in infamy” we have helped mightily to save ourselves and the cause for which we fight. Through the remarkable unity of effort of practically all our people, through the unprecedented co-operation of government, management, labor, and agriculture, we have achieved a level of production that has made us in truth the “arsenal of democracy.” Our military leadership has equalled the best in our history. Our fighting men, our sol-



diers, sailors, and aviators, our doctors and engineers, our nurses and women auxiliaries, have added fresh laurels to a long tradition of heroism. Often these men, nurtured in the virtues of peace and without battle experience, have met and vanquished under seemingly insuperable obstacles the hardened legions of the adversary. The deathless courage and high daring of the Coral Sea, Midway, and Guadalcanal will live forever in the annals of warfare. The storming of the beaches of Normandy will go down in history as one of the greatest military triumphs of the ages. It must be remembered too that our fighting men, unlike those of our great associates in the United Nations, have fought, not on or near their native soil, but beyond the seas in the most distant lands. To fight as they did, they had to possess not only courage and valor of the highest order, but also adaptability, imagination, and understanding.

In time we shall have won the war. Of our part in the victory we may be justly proud. But the supreme test of ourselves and our civilization will come after the guns have ceased firing and the bombs stopped falling. On that day we shall face conditions at home and in the world not unlike those out of which the fascist affliction came. The experience of our generation proves that, while tyrants can be cut down by the sword, tyranny is not so easily vanquished. We may

hang Hitler and all his associates in villainy from the highest tree, but if we do not remove those conditions that made this monster possible we may live to see his likeness return. And he may visit mankind again, not by way of Germany, Italy, or Japan, but through some other country, possibly our own. Whenever millions of ordinary people lose faith in their institutions, experience a deep sense of insecurity and frustration, feel uncertain, anxious, and fearful about the future, the way is open for the rise to power of the contemporary totalitarian dictator. The present war, like the one that preceded it a quarter of a century ago, is largely a symptom of deep-running revolutionary forces in our society and the world.

### 3

A PERIOD OF PROFOUND TRANSITION. We are living in a period of most profound social transition and reconstruction. We have come to the end of an age that began with those first settlements along the Atlantic seaboard in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Even the great events that attended first the founding and later the preservation of our republic were less disturbing in many ways than those that beat upon us today. Moreover, that the age now opening will be as glorious in its achievements or as pro-

ductive of human welfare as the age now closing is by no means certain. The issue will hang on our capacity for self-government and liberty, and on the great choices, the great decisions, the great social inventions, which we make during the years and decades immediately ahead. This capacity and these choices, decisions, and inventions in their turn will depend on the intellectual and moral qualities of our leadership and of ourselves.

That a new age is on the way is clearly indicated by a number of great changes that have taken place in our civilization and in our relations with the rest of the world. So profound and revolutionary are these changes that almost any one of them by itself should cause us to take sober thought of the future. Our participation in the present war and its predecessor less than a generation ago, in spite of a general desire to remain neutral, demonstrates clearly that we have left behind the more limited world of our fathers. These events, however, are but the most striking evidences of the great transition under way.

Many old landmarks have passed or are passing into history. The great migrations, the source of our people, have ended, perhaps forever. The geographical frontier, which for centuries made America the golden land of opportunity, has closed, never to be reopened. Our population, which for a long period,

because of an extraordinarily high birthrate, doubled about every twenty-five years, will probably reach a point of stability within a generation. The closely knit patriarchal family, the vehicle for carrying European civilization across North America, has changed its form and lost many of its functions. The self-sufficient farm and rural neighborhood, the cradle of our democracy, will mold the mind and character of our people no longer. Small business enterprise, the backbone of our old middle class, is playing an ever decreasing role in our economy. Finally, the great ocean barriers, which sheltered our republic from the wars of the Old World, have lost their power to protect us.

Many new landmarks, harbingers of the coming age, have appeared. Our economy, dominated by gigantic corporate enterprise, is marked by the rise of monopoly, the concentration of title to productive property in fewer and fewer hands, the growth of a vast population working for hire, the development of labor unions and farmer organizations, and the emergence of deep class cleavages and struggles. Economic crises, becoming ever wider in their scope, deeper in their impact, and more tragic in their consequences, threaten to destroy our free democratic institutions. The productivity of the new industrial economy, as revealed in the present war, surpasses the dreams of any earlier generation. Government, and particularly

federal government, intervening increasingly in the economy over a period of many decades, stands today as an indispensable factor in the maintenance of production and the organization of distribution. Finally, our American republic, beginning its career a hundred and fifty years ago as a feeble and debtor state situated on the extreme borders of European civilization, has become for the moment the foremost creditor nation, the first power of the earth, and a mighty force in the politics of the world. Clearly our civilization has broken its eighteenth- and nineteenth-century moorings and is well launched on a new and strange course.

#### 4

FROM AGRARIAN TO INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION. These great changes, however, and others that might be added, fail to convey an adequate conception of the period through which we are passing. For the most part they are but evidences of the release of powerful new forces that are transforming the very foundations of our existence. These new forces, science and technology, are carrying us swiftly from one order of civilization to another. Already they have changed beyond recognition the material bases of our old American life. We must assume that in the course

of time they will affect profoundly our entire civilization, even our moral ideas, our view of the universe, and our conception of human destiny.

We stand today between two civilizations—one that is passing away and another that is being born. We stand between the agrarian and mercantile civilization of our ancestors and a strange and as yet undefined industrial civilization in which our children will live. It was in the former, with its small enterprises, its great distances, its little neighborhoods, its face-to-face relationships, and its dependence on human energy, that our social ideas and institutions were molded. Our minds, formed largely in this earlier age, are scarcely equipped to perform the heavy creative, organizing, and managerial labors which the rapid march of events has thrust upon us. We are not yet equipped psychologically to live in an age in which science and technology are moving inexorably from one department of life to another. Our old self-contained agrarian civilization has been annihilated, but the sense of that civilization persists in the minds of our people.

The nature of this new industrial civilization, its imperatives and its possibilities, will be treated in a later chapter. It must suffice here to stress the magnitude and importance of the task that confronts us. We of the present generation must decide what elements

of our heritage can and should be preserved in the new world that is taking shape in our time. Some of those elements will have to go, simply because they cannot live under the strange conditions of industrial civilization. Others, the product of ignorance, bigotry, and brute power, we would like to abandon and forget. Then there are others, the fruit of centuries of toil and struggle, hope and thought, which are beyond price and constitute the very essence of humane and civilized life. How to preserve these is a major task of our generation. But as we regard our heritage with an appraising eye we must also set our faces resolutely toward the future and accept eagerly the rich promise of the new age.

The task of coming to terms with the advancing forces of industrial civilization is urgent. Time does not wait. The process of change, shaken by ever deepening crisis, often moves with the speed of electricity. Also we in America must realize, as we have never realized before, that we do not inhabit the earth alone. For at least a generation now the entire world has been in a deeply disturbed condition. Powerful revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements have been engaged in a bitter struggle for mastery. Only the totally uninformed can believe that this condition will disappear at the end of the present war. Because of the damming of currents of

change during this conflict, the general situation may be considerably aggravated when peace comes. The desperate sufferings of peoples as well as the hopes aroused in the hearts of men the world over by the Four Freedoms, the Atlantic Charter, and other pronouncements may well increase the demand for quick and radical change. Unless those who love freedom are prepared to move swiftly and surely, they may find themselves out-manuevered by some form of totalitarian movement.

## 5

A CHALLENGE TO OUR DEMOCRACY. The American people must realize, and realize speedily, that they are challenged, not only by troubles at home, but also by revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements abroad. For the first time in their history a powerful rival for the affections of the common man has appeared in the world. Down through the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth the oppressed and down-trodden classes, nations, and races of the earth looked with the eyes of hope to America and the American social system. Today millions of common people all over the world, and particularly among the colored races, are turning their gaze toward Russia. This is due in part to the



unsurpassed triumphs of Soviet arms in the present war. But it is due chiefly to the fact that Russian communism, though marked by a ruthless dictatorship and the repudiation of democratic political rights and liberties, has confronted boldly and successfully two of the most pressing and crucial social problems of the age. Through its system of collective ownership of the means of production and its program of general planning it has consigned economic crises to the waste-basket of history, abolished unemployment and the fear of unemployment, released and harnessed fully the energies of technology, and achieved a stable and progressive industrial economy. Also it has applied with unexampled rigor to the many and diverse races and peoples living within the borders of the Soviet Union the Christian and democratic principle of equality.

Whether the Russian system will be transformed into a political democracy or will be wrecked sooner or later on the rock of dictatorship we do not know. Either is possible. Also, whether it will embark on a course of imperialism that would offend the conscience of mankind and destroy its moral challenge, only the coming years will disclose. It would be the part of wisdom to assume that it will continue indefinitely in substantially its present form. In that event, if we should experience again a prolonged

economic crisis, with millions upon millions of unemployed, with class, religious, and race relations embittered, and with the entire population moved by fear and anxiety regarding the future, the appeal of Russian communism to our working people, totalitarian though it might be, would rise like a shooting star. The reaction toward such a tendency on the part of our middle and propertied classes, assisted by bigots, outlaws, and gangsters, would doubtless be, as in Europe of the past generation, an American form of fascism. The story of our democracy, the most inspiring story of its kind in history, might then enter its final chapter. Only by achieving a union of economic stability and political liberty can our democracy hope to endure.

The present is a time for greatness. It is a time made for a great leadership and a great people. It is a time for understanding, for courage, for wisdom, for tolerance and charity on the part of all groups and classes. It is a time for us to display in the waging of peace the resourcefulness, energy, and devotion to the common good that are enabling us to wage and win the most terrible and decisive of wars. It is a time for faith—a militant faith in democracy and human freedom that surpasses in its power the faith of any totalitarian system. It is a time for a great education, for an education generously and nobly

conceived, for an education that expresses boldly and imaginatively the full promise of America. The ability of our people in the deep crises of the past to rise to their full stature gives ground for hope in the present age.

## II

### THE SOURCE OF A GREAT EDUCATION

#### I

OUR FAITH IN EDUCATION. We have in our heritage the source of a great education. We have had unsurpassed faith in the worth and power of learning. During colonial times, even as we struggled to survive in a strange and hostile land, we nurtured this faith. The founders of the republic, notably Franklin, Jefferson, Madison and Washington, believed that the strength of the new nation would depend on the spread of enlightenment. And the great champions of democracy throughout our national history have insisted that the survival of our free institutions requires an educated people. Today, when confronted with difficult personal or social problems, we are inclined to turn to education as an unfailing solution. This disposition is manifest at the present time.

Our historic faith has been translated into vigorous and sustained action. During the past century we have developed a comprehensive system of public schools

which has challenged and influenced the educational thought and practice of the Old World. Our famous "educational ladder" repudiated the aristocratic idea of Europe and established the principle of a single educational system for all the people. Reaching from the kindergarten to the graduate and professional schools of the university and purporting to open to all classes the doors to advanced training, it is one of the finest and truest expressions of our democracy. Although the measures adopted have by no means fully equalized educational opportunities, the American people have supported their schools with unrivalled generosity. Our secondary schools and colleges enroll more young people than the secondary schools and colleges of all the rest of the world.

Our faith, however, has always had a naïve aspect. As a people we have never inquired critically into the moral and social foundations of education. We have generally assumed education to be something that goes on in the school and is good in any quantity for the ills that beset mankind. We have assumed further that in essence it is a single thing, everywhere the same, governed by its own laws, feared by despotisms and loved by free peoples. The great concern for and the generous support of education by contemporary totalitarian states have revealed the total inadequacy of such a simple conception. We know now

that education can serve any cause, that it can serve either tyranny or freedom, that it can even serve to foster ignorance and rivet on a people the chains of bondage. The educational programs of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan should drive all who love freedom to probe deeply into the nature of education—into the nature of education not as a timeless and abstract process carried on in some visionary utopia, but rather as a life function of the actual societies of history. Such an inquiry easily demonstrates the truth of the proposition to be developed later that a conception of education must always express a conception of life or civilization.

2

PROPOSALS FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM. Our failure to understand the moral and social foundations of education has resulted in much relatively futile discussion, research, and experimentation. It has also led us to be satisfied with inferior conceptions and achievements. Although we have developed a good education, an education of which we can rightly be proud, we have never developed a truly great education, an education which expresses the best in our heritage. We have lived below the possibilities of our civilization.

This is not to say that we have been uncritical of our education, or that we have not given thought to its improvement. Our literature is full of discussions of what is wrong with the school and of proposals to correct its weaknesses. The shelves of our libraries groan under the weight of educational reports, surveys, and studies. New theories and experiments follow one another in an endless stream. The difficulty is that the overwhelming part of this activity deals with either the surface or the mechanics of the problem. Indeed the most widely and hotly discussed proposals for reform of our generation fail to confront squarely the central problem of all educational thought—the problem of the relation of education to the nature and fortunes of our civilization. Three of these proposals are prominently before us at the present time.

The first proposal would seek guidance in the concept of efficiency. Educators, apparently impressed by the achievements of scientific management in industry, have proceeded to count and measure every phase of the school enterprise from toilets to vocabularies. Some have even ventured to tabulate and classify all the activities in which a teacher engages, from washing his teeth in the morning to marking examination papers in the evening. They have thus implied that through the process of counting and measuring,

largely limited to the procedures of the school, the answers to all the difficult problems in education would emerge as neatly and automatically as a sum emerges from a calculating machine. While the concept of efficiency is a very useful one, if the educator knows what he is to be efficient about, it can provide little positive guidance in the development of a great education. Indeed, primary concentration on school efficiency at a time when our civilization is being transformed is both a form of escape and a way of compounding the troubles of the age.

The second proposal turns for help to the *interests* of children. According to this view, the child should play a more important role in *shaping* the process of education than the school or the teacher. Presumably the child achieves maturity through a process of spontaneous generation or unfoldment which the adult world through its educational agencies should merely guard and nourish. Here is the most optimistic and romantic interpretation of human nature since Rousseau. That the factor of interest must always play a large role in the rearing of the young is readily admitted. Since education can proceed only within the range of the possible interests of children, they do provide, like the learning process and the "laws of the organism" generally, the limits within which choice can be made. But those limits are known to be



extremely wide. We must assume, if we are faithful to the findings of science, that children in their biological inheritance are essentially the same in all times and places, among all races and peoples, among all groups and classes. Yet their interests vary greatly from epoch to epoch and from society to society. Although an education of great power must arouse and channel the interests of the young, it can never be derived from those interests. The concept of the "needs" of children is far more useful. Yet any suggestion that such needs are independent of civilization is certain to result in futility.

The third proposal looks for guidance to the "one hundred great books." From the standpoint of the teacher, this is without doubt the most attractive of the three proposals. It is the ideal answer of the pedagogue to the truly vexing problems confronting education. Once having mastered the "great books" he could pursue his calling for the rest of his life without being disturbed by the issues of depression and prosperity, of war and peace, of despotism and democracy, of the future of his civilization. He could withdraw from the world and dwell all his years in a scholastic paradise. He could be fairly sure that only two or three new books would be added to the list in his lifetime, that their status would be uncertain for at least a couple of centuries, and that anyway

they could not equal in value those written by the "ancients" two thousand years ago. One weakness in the proposal is that some tyrant might come to power and burn the books. This has happened now and then in both the past and the present. Then, alas, the pedagog would be out of a job! Although the proposal properly directs attention to certain sublime achievements of the mind of man, emphasizes the processes of thought and reflection, and stresses enduring and universal elements in the human heritage, it is fundamentally a manifestation of academic nostalgia. It constitutes an attempt to retire, without sacrifice of glory, from the present troubled age.

### 3

EDUCATION AND CIVILIZATION. When we begin to seek a firm base for an education suited to our age, we encounter at once a most obvious and, at the same time, a most fundamental truth: education is always a function of some particular civilization at some particular time in history. It can never be a purely autonomous process, independent of time and place and conducted according to its own laws. It is as much an integral part of a civilization as is an economic or political system. The very way in which education is conceived, whether its purpose is to free or enslave

the mind, is a feature of the civilization which it serves. The great differences in educational philosophies and practices from society to society are due primarily to differences in civilization.

A civilization, however, does not generate an education impersonally as a tree generates fruit. Nor is education derived automatically through a process of analysis and assembling of data. Always at the point where an educational program comes into being definite choices are made among many possibilities. And these choices are made, not by the gods or the laws of nature, but by men and women—men and women moved by all of those considerations that move them in other realms of conduct—by their knowledge and understanding, their hopes and fears, their purposes and loyalties, their views of the world and human destiny. Presumably a given society at any given time therefore might formulate and adopt any one of a number of educational conceptions or programs, each of which would obviously be an expression of its civilization. But each would also be stamped by the special qualities of the men and women who framed it. These men and women in turn would be authentic, but not exclusively authentic, products of their civilization.

The formulation of an educational conception or program is thus a creative act, or rather a long series

of complex creative acts. It is a threefold process embracing analysis, selection, and synthesis. It always involves choice among possibilities, and even decision as to what is possible. It likewise involves the affirming of values and the framing of both individual and social purposes. Inevitably education conveys to the young responses to the most profound questions of life—questions of truth and falsehood, of beauty and ugliness, of good and evil. These affirmations may be expressed in what an education fails to do as well as in what it does, in what it rejects as well as in what it adopts. The total education of a people, the education that goes on from the day of birth, both in and outside the school, shapes with overwhelming power the character and destiny of that people. In its organized phases it is deliberately designed to make of both the individual and society something which otherwise they would not become. The launching of an educational undertaking therefore is a very serious business. It is one of the most vital and responsible forms of statesmanship.

#### 4

EDUCATION AND THE PRESENT AGE. The age now unfolding, to repeat, is the most critical age of our history. We face great troubles at home, powerful

revolutions and counter-revolutions abroad, unprecedented responsibilities in the world, a future of almost limitless possibilities for good and evil. In the decades ahead our democracy may be transformed into some form of totalitarian despotism or it may march from triumph to triumph and fulfill gloriously and nobly its historic promise.

The age calls for a truly great education—an education commensurate in conception and in practice with the hazards and the opportunities of these times, an education for freedom and humanity equal in power to the education of any existing or possible totalitarian system. Such an education, however, cannot be derived from the concept of efficiency, from the interests of children, or even from a study of the “great books” of the Western World. It can come only from a bold confronting of the nature, the conditions, the values, and the potentialities of our civilization. An education can rise no higher than the conception of civilization that pervades it, provides its substance, and gives it purpose and direction.

Our first responsibility therefore is to formulate on the foundation of fact a conception of American civilization in its historical and world setting. We must ask ourselves in all soberness what we are “up to” on this continent. Only when we have answered this question, and answered it magnificently and pow-

erfully, will we be in position to draw the broad outlines of a great education for our people in the coming years. If we can find no answer, or if we find a mean and feeble answer, our education, however efficiently it may be conducted, will at best be mediocre and uninspired. In the discharge of this responsibility we shall begin with a broad inquiry into the historical and geographical bases of our civilization, into our special heritage as a people.

### III

## AMERICAN CIVILIZATION—OUR HERITAGE

### I

A UNIQUE AND GLORIOUS HERITAGE. We possess a unique heritage. Although every country or nation has its own peculiar history in which it may feel pride or shame, we know that our history has followed a most unusual course. This land that became America was settled more swiftly than any other; and the great migrations thither were unlike the migrations of other times. Moreover, as the decades passed into centuries America came to represent in the eyes of the world and in the eyes of her own people something distinctive in the long human struggle. She came to symbolize certain ideas, certain values, and a certain way of life. Ever since we embarked upon our great experiment in popular rule we have been the source of both hope and fear among the nations of the earth.

We possess also a glorious heritage. Although many nations have contributed mightily to human advance and many may rightly sing of their achievements, the story of the rise of America within a few generations to a position of unsurpassed power in the world is one of the truly great epics of history. We have of course had our dark moments and we have often been false to our finest traditions. We have sometimes stoned our prophets, nourished our prejudices, winked at injustice, practiced darkest bigotry, condoned corruption in high places, and tolerated grievous exploitation of man by man. Yet as a people we do not celebrate these acts; on the contrary, we deplore them and cherish as the true expression of our genius the incomparable Declaration of Independence, the Federal Constitution and Bill of Rights, the Gettysburg Address, and our many struggles for liberty and justice. Ours has been a peculiarly happy and favored land, a land of opportunity and hope, a land of vast horizons and unlimited promise. Ours has also been a sheltered land. Never have we felt the iron heel of the conqueror; nor have we ever seen our republic swept from border to border by the fire of foreign armies.

To outline this heritage of ours in a few pages is obviously impossible. A complete and exhaustive presentation, moreover, would not serve the purposes of



the present volume. The treatment here is frankly and deliberately selective in character. It is intended to be selective, within the limits of the possible, of the best in our history. It is an interpretation of our past designed to guide and shape the education of our children, to guide and shape our long future. Its veracity and worth must be left to the judgment of the American people. If they should reject it, no amount of scholarship could give it life. Later chapters will add to what is presented here.

2

AMERICA IS A CHILD OF THE MODERN AGE. America was discovered and settled during one of the great revolutionary periods of history, at a time when mankind had struck its tents and was on the march. It was an age that witnessed the rebirth of science, the renewal of bold speculation concerning the nature of the universe, the release of creative powers of many kinds, and the general and rapid advance of knowledge, thought, and invention. Daring geographical explorations doubled the size of the known world, established the rotundity of the earth, opened up new sources of wealth, stimulated commerce and travel, revealed strange peoples and cultures, banished many ancient fears, and extended incredibly both the physi-

cal and spiritual horizons of the peoples of western Europe. Men experienced a sense of power and liberation that they had rarely, if ever, known before. The discovery and settlement of America were an expression of the spirit of this great age. And something of the audacity and hopefulness of that spirit has left an indelible mark on our civilization.

America was discovered and settled as the social system of the Middle Ages was disintegrating. New forms of economic production, new modes of warfare, and new agencies of popular enlightenment were undermining the material and spiritual foundations of the privileged orders and were bringing new social classes to power. At the same time the advance of knowledge and thought was weakening the authority of the church and turning the attention of men increasingly to the affairs of this world. America, moreover, was settled largely by people who in both their national and class origins were most fully and closely identified with these new forces. America was settled chiefly in the early days by Englishmen, and by poor, young, adventurous, dissenting, and even outcast Englishmen. This land was a haven of refuge also for men and women of many nations fleeing the oppressions and tyrannies of feudal institutions. It was a virgin seed-bed for the "dangerous thoughts" then agitating the mind of the Old World.

The spirit of the new Europe, struggling to be born, found the birth easier in America. Here were no vested rights and interests deeply and firmly rooted in law and custom. Here were few great landed estates that had been passed from father to son for generations and centuries. Here were few noble lords, of either church or state, who by armed retainers or by "motto and blazon" imposed their will upon the "rabble." Here were few prisons and dungeons and torture chambers for breaking the bodies and spirits of dissenters and rebels. Here, with rich and unoccupied land ever beckoning, men and women craving freedom could not be held in bondage. In remarkable measure, therefore, those who came to America were able to cast off the fetters of the past and make a fresh start in building a civilization. Although attempts were made to establish feudal ideas and institutions in America, these attempts were never really successful. Even to this day the term *feudal* carries a bad odor to the nostrils of our people. The fact that the present class structure of American capitalism has no support in feudal attitudes and outlooks surviving from a pre-capitalistic age is a source of great strength to our democracy.

As the modern age advanced, powerful movements for intellectual and political liberation, stemming in some measure from the ancient civilizations, swept

through the more highly developed countries of western Europe. These movements, notably English rationalism and the French Enlightenment of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were given a friendly reception by our people. A distinguished French historian has said that the ideas of the Enlightenment took deeper root in America than in France. Of these ideas, perhaps the most revolutionary was that of human progress and of the indefinite perfectability of man and his institutions. This idea found its natural home in America. The proposition that the future can be better than the past is an essential and even distinctive part of our heritage. Although it may foster an irrational optimism and may be narrowly interpreted, it is one of the great liberating ideas of history. Even our most conservative interests always claim to be marching under the banner of progress.

The American Revolution itself was a vigorous affirmation of the spirit of the modern age. Deriving its philosophy in part from the long tradition of political liberalism in England and the eighteenth century Enlightenment in France, from the ideas of Harrington and Locke, of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Condorcet, and in part from the life conditions of the New World, this revolution not only launched the greatest and most successful experiment in popular

government in history but also reacted powerfully on the social ideas and institutions of the rest of the world. It helped to explode the age-old doctrine of the divinity of kings and aristocracies and encouraged people to revolt against their inherited and self-appointed masters. It caused tyrants to sit uneasily on their thrones and members of privileged orders to worry about their privileges. Our revolution served as a great sounding board to send certain ideas of the modern age around the world.

As the republic proceeded successfully on its course, it became a subject of discussion and controversy everywhere. Increasingly it aroused the fears of ruling classes, the hopes of the oppressed, and the interest of all. Generation after generation visitors from the Old World came to our shores in an endless stream—some to abuse, some to praise, some simply to learn. Millions came so that they and their children might live among us and join their blood and fortunes with ours forever. But that is another story. The thing to remember here is that the spirit of daring and adventure, the faith in man and his powers, and the promise of a better world which characterize the modern age constitute a priceless element in our heritage. To abandon these things, to become fearful of the future, to become engrossed in the defense of

vested rights, would be to betray the genius of American history.

3

AMERICA IS A NATION OF MANY PEOPLES. America has been populated over a period of more than three centuries by the greatest migration of history. During the one hundred years preceding the attack on Pearl Harbor approximately thirty-eight million men, women, and children crossed the great oceans and the borders north and south to make their homes in the United States. In terms of numbers the migrations of all other times and places dwindle into relative insignificance. These immigrants and their descendants, from Jamestown down to the last boat entering an American port, have formed and are forming the American people. By their toil they have built our civilization.

This great migration, in comparison with earlier movements of peoples, has been unique. It was a migration not of clans or tribes or nations wandering away from the homeland, but rather of individuals and families forsaking by deliberate resolve their place of birth and moving by modern engines of locomotion to a strange and distant country. Though they

doubtless endeavored to bring their possessions with them, they were forced to leave much behind, spiritual as well as material things. Also many possessions which they were able to transport across the oceans did not fit into the conditions of life in America. This fact compelled the development of a new civilization on the western shores of the Atlantic. It placed a premium on adaptability, inventiveness, and experimental temper. The migration, moreover, was a movement of many and diverse peoples—peoples diverse in race, language, and every aspect of culture. As a consequence America, throughout her history, has been the scene of a most extraordinary mingling and clashing of classes, religions, nationalities, and races. This fact also compelled our people to modify the institutions and ways of life which they had known in the lands from which they came.

At the time of the discovery by Europeans America was sparsely inhabited by a brave and vigorous native population living in a primitive stage of culture and probably derived originally from Asiatic sources. Though these people fought a losing battle with the newcomers from the Atlantic to the Pacific, they have left their mark upon us and have influenced our life and civilization. They have enriched our language, contributed much to our economy, altered our modes of warfare, and affected in some measure our moral

and political ideas. Also they have contributed to the formation of the American stock.

The earlier migrations from the Old World were largely of Anglo-Saxon origin—people from England, Wales, and Scotland. Included among the first settlers also were many members of other races and nationalities, notably Negroes, Dutch, Swedes, French, Spaniards, Irish, and Germans. It was the British elements, however, that dominated the migrations down to the end of the colonial period and even into the early decades of the nineteenth century. These elements therefore have played a central role in the building of our civilization. They gave us our language, many of our political ideas and institutions, and innumerable cultural traits. Also, because of advantages associated largely with priority of arrival, they have tended to occupy in disproportionate numbers positions of privilege and responsibility in our life.

As the nineteenth century advanced and gave way to the twentieth, the source of the migration shifted again and again. Although immigrants continued to come from England, Wales, Scotland, northern Ireland, Africa, Holland, Sweden, France, Spain, and Germany, additional millions came from southern Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Poland, the Balkans, Hungary, Russia, Fin-



land, Portugal, Canada, Mexico, China, Japan, India, the Philippines, and other countries. These later migrations, moreover, not only brought new national and racial elements to America. They also brought new religious sects and faiths. To the original preponderantly Protestant population they added Jews, Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics, and even Mohammedans, Buddhists, and others. Today the people of America are no longer primarily Anglo-Saxon in their origins. It is estimated that the combined contribution of England, Wales, Scotland, and northern Ireland to the making of our population is well under one half, probably about forty per cent. The "typical American" is descended from many stocks.

These diverse peoples and their descendants, living and working together, are creating a new nation whose cultural and biological roots reach back to most of the countries of the earth and to most of the races of mankind. Some came early; some came late; the vast majority came because they wanted to come. Some came to escape oppression, some to avoid the jail or the rope, some to find adventure, some to make their fortunes, some to enjoy the liberties of the new land: they came from many motives. All, except those who were dragged into bondage or taken by force from their native lands, came to better their condition. All have helped to build America.

Each of these many peoples has made and will continue to make its contribution to the enrichment of our life and civilization. All of our present inhabitants, whatever their origin or time of arrival, whatever their race, color, or creed, are Americans and are entitled under our laws to all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities constituting the American birthright. No one of the many elements composing our nation, not even the Anglo-Saxon, can properly claim to be the "true Americans" or to be entitled to specially favored treatment. Whatever may be the practice, the fundamental law of our country makes no distinctions in citizenship. There are no citizens of second or third class. We are all simply citizens of the American republic.

This attempt to build a new nation out of elements from most of the races and peoples of the world is one of the greatest experiments of history. In the long run it may equal our experiment in popular government. It has of course increased our troubles and made more hazardous the operation of our institutions. Our different races, religions, and nationalities have often found it difficult to live and work together. Fears, jealousies, prejudices, and hatreds have marred their relationships from the beginning and have given the demagog or the bigot opportunity to put his perverted talents to work. They have warred among

themselves and exploited one another. Yet the experiment has not worked out badly. Our civilization is richer, more varied and colorful than it would have been if our population had remained Anglo-Saxon. Moreover, in spite of the differences of race, creed, and nationality that still divide us, we are all united in our love of America. Few indeed there are among us, even among the most severely exploited, who would care to return to the lands from which they or their fathers and mothers came.

Today the great migration is over. Although immigrants will continue, perhaps for generations, to come to our shores in considerable numbers, the American people are here. The future of our country, therefore, the destiny of our civilization, is essentially in the keeping of ourselves and our children forever. The talents, actual and potential, of all the many elements of our population are the greatest resource of our nation. Here is the richest portion of our rich heritage.

#### 4

AMERICA IS A NATION OF COMMON PEOPLE. From beginning to end the great migration was essentially a migration of common people—of people without pretensions of social rank or superiority. The records show that for the most part only the “middling and lower

orders" of Europe came to America. During the century and a half following the first settlements a very large proportion of the immigrants were bond servants and Negro slaves. Also throughout our entire history many men, women, and children were persuaded under false pretenses to come to America by employers, steamship companies, and others seeking profit from the miseries of the Old World. Others, convicted of crime under the harsh laws of the age, were sent by force to penal colonies on this side of the Atlantic. The vast majority of the immigrants, however, came to America voluntarily and with some knowledge of the nature and conditions of the venture. In the course of time, consequently, there developed a glorious tradition about our country. America became a haven for the oppressed and the downtrodden, a land of opportunity for the poor, the underprivileged, and the dispossessed, a promise of redemption for the outcast, the criminal, and the damned of the earth.

Few indeed were the members of privileged classes who came to America. In the very nature of the case such people do not migrate, unless they are able to surmount the infirmities of their class, unless they are moved by love of adventure or devotion to ideals. Some of these certainly crossed the Atlantic and played a distinguished role in the development of the

country. But as a general rule the privileged stay with their privileges. To leave the land where one is born and where one's ancestors lie buried requires powerful motivation. This is particularly true if the journey to the new country is long and hazardous, if life there is lacking in accustomed comforts, and if the language, institutions, and culture are strange. To the privileged classes of Europe the necessary motivation was commonly lacking. Moreover, it must be remembered that opportunity is always relative. What is opportunity for the poor may be servitude for the rich; what is opportunity for the man of courage may be hopeless risk for the coward; and what is opportunity for the idealist may be boredom for the lecher. To the privileged classes of the Old World, America was rarely a land of opportunity, at least not until these latter days when in the marriage market fortunes may be purchased with titles and pedigrees.

That America was settled by common people is in the record. It is equally in the record, however, that all of the common people, all of the oppressed and downtrodden, all of the poor and underprivileged of the Old World did not migrate to the New. Those who came must have been in some way exceptional. They must have rebelled against poverty and oppression; they must have had unusual faith in themselves; they must have had greater energy and daring

than their brothers and sisters and neighbors whom they left behind. Nevertheless the fact remains that America has been in a very special sense a land of the common man.

The story of the rise of this common man to power in America is one of the most exciting in history. At the time of the early settlements he was often without property, without civic rights, without formal education, without social rank in the country of his birth. In many cases he was either just emerging or not far removed from serfdom. Here in America he gradually cast off the weight of centuries of oppression, rose to his feet, looked his "betters" in the eye, and became a free man. Given opportunities denied him in the older societies, he achieved confidence in himself, grew to a higher stature, and developed a new conception of his own worth, nature, and powers. It is even reported by aristocratic visitors from the other side of the Atlantic that he often became "down-right impudent and disrespectful." Unquestionably he lost many of those qualities which the master finds so pleasing and charming in the servant.

Here in America this common man proceeded to storm the citadels of power in society. He gained possession of firearms, acquired skill in their use, abolished the military caste, and took into his own hands the elemental power to take life. He won the

right to dispose of his own labor, acquired title to land and the tools of production, learned to manage his farm or shop in his own interest, and obtained a large measure of economic freedom and power. He conquered the right of suffrage, took over political processes and institutions, framed a bill of civil liberties, and created a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." He established a free press, founded a system of public schools, gained access to knowledge and thought, and laid the intellectual foundations of human liberty. He separated church and state, proclaimed the principle of freedom of worship, and broke the hold of ecclesiastical authoritarianism over his mind. He even inserted in the immortal Declaration the affirmation that all men are created equal. Although these victories were never complete and although many battles won at one time have been lost at another, his total achievement has given hope to his brothers and sisters in all lands.

Here in America this common man led a further assault on the entire system of class and caste. He abolished the laws of primogeniture and entail. He nurtured the doctrine that the individual, regardless of ancestry or previous condition, should be judged only by his own industry, talents, and character and

that he might aspire to the highest positions in the economic, political, and cultural life of the nation. Moreover, since he worked, and usually worked hard, for a living, he succeeded in giving to labor a dignity and a status not to be found in the societies of the Old World. Also, in very considerable measure, he pricked the ancient bubble of the innate superiority of the man of family and rank. The professed aristocrat, stripped of the artificial supports of tradition and caste, was often found to be quite an ordinary person. Here therefore the very idea of a social class, endowed with special rights and privileges, tended to become repulsive and un-American.

Perhaps the supreme achievement of this common man in America was the establishment of a system of constitutional government. As he struggled for independence from the mother country he carried through a uniquely successful revolution. Building on the ideas of English political liberalism and the experience in self-government gained during the colonial period, he refused to follow the classical revolutionary pattern of the Old World with its cycle from dictatorship through armed revolt and military triumph back to dictatorship. He broke through this cycle and moved from victory on the battlefield to a novel and bold venture in statecraft. Led by a com-



pany of men of unsurpassed courage, inventiveness, and wisdom, he consolidated the gains of the revolution and fashioned a great charter of political rights and duties, processes and institutions designed to achieve liberty and justice, change and stability under a regime of law. In spite of heavy strains put upon it by the extraordinary growth and expansion of the nation, this charter has endured for more than a century and a half. Its authors hoped that it would make possible fundamental changes in economy and even government itself "without tumult, or the hazard of revolution." This is the central article of the American political faith.

The story of course is still unfinished. What this common man will do in the strange, complex, and dynamic industrial order which is sweeping the world, no one can say. That great trials and hazards throng the pathway to the future is evident. Yet this much is in the record: American civilization, whatever its merits or faults, is a monument to the powers resident in common people—in those millions of common people who in the course of more than three centuries came to this land and made it their home. Faith in America has always been faith in common people—in a common people capable of producing leaders of virtue and talent from its own ranks.

AMERICA IS A RICH AND BEAUTIFUL LAND. Every civilization must have a geographical base or home; and for any particular type of civilization some spots on the earth are far more choice than others. We possess in generous proportions one of those choice spots for the present epoch. In this respect we stand among the most favored of the nations. This land of ours is almost uniquely rich in those resources of climate, water, soil, forest, and minerals necessary to the development of a great, progressive, and enduring civilization in the industrial age.

The climate of America, the combined and varied action of heat, frost, moisture, and atmospheric pressure, is one of our most valuable resources. Its range and quality are exceptionally well suited to release the energy of human beings and to support the life of an extraordinary variety of valuable plants and animals. When an excellent climate forms a union with fertile soil, a land enjoys the richest gift that nature can bestow. These two resources are so ideally combined in America that there are few products of garden, field, orchard, or pasture, useful or pleasing to man, that cannot be grown somewhere in the country. We possess almost one-fourth of the arable land lying within the temperate zones of the earth. Orig-

inally our forests were unsurpassed. In their primeval state they were the finest to be found anywhere in the world and covered the colossal area of 850,000,000 acres. In its mineral resources this land is perhaps the most favored region in all the world for the building of an industrial civilization. It has been said authoritatively that we possess "approximately 40 per cent of the mineral reserves of the earth." While this estimate will probably have to be revised downward as we consume our inheritance and as more precise and comprehensive geological surveys are made on all the continents, and while certain important minor metals such as nickel, tin, manganese, platinum, and others, are found in insufficient quantities, the fact remains that we are among the most fortunate of peoples. Finally, our numerous streams and rivers, as they flow down to the sea, constitute a great source of energy to supplement the rich mineral reserves of coal and oil.

America is a beautiful land. As a forest draping slope and stream is more than timber for the mill, as a river winding among the hills is more than power for industry, as a mountain range pushing its snowy peaks into the clouds is more than ore for the smelting furnace, as an orchard in blossom in the springtime is more than fruit for the cannery in the autumn, or as a field of ripened wheat waving and billowing in

the breeze is more than flour for the bakery, so this land with its "rocks and rills," its "woods and templed hills," is more than the source of our livelihood. It is our home, our dwelling place forever—the place where we are born and grow up, where we live and love, work and play, grow old and die. And it is a beautiful place as it comes from the hand of nature—beautiful in the grandeur and majesty of its great distances and proportions, in the contours and settings of its brooks and rivers, its ponds, lakes, and seas, in the lines and shades of its valleys, hills, and mountains, in the tints and colors of its forests, plains, and prairies, of its skies and horizons, in the rhythms of its calms and storms, of its days and seasons. "The valley of the Mississippi," wrote the great Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, more than a century ago, "is, upon the whole, the most magnificent dwelling place prepared by God for man's abode."

This rich and beautiful land *was* a sheltered land. The expanse of the great oceans on either side, which guarded it from the wars and aggressions of the Old World, was for generations one of its most valuable resources. It gave to our people a sense of security and guaranteed to them the opportunity of relatively peaceful development. Safe behind her powerful natural ramparts, America was almost a world by her-

self. This is a resource, however, which we have no more.

This greatly favored land has left its impress on us and our civilization. It was the primary object of the great migrations. Like a powerful magnet it drew the peoples of the earth to its shores and then beckoned them onward toward the setting sun. It offered to the common man a chance to escape the harsh material deprivations and limitations of the Old World and to develop his own powers and institutions. It did much to arouse in him a hopeful, progressive, venturesome, and independent spirit. For almost three hundred years, as he moved westward with the advancing frontier, he was under the spell of a land that seemed almost boundless in extent and exhaustless in resources. But at last the geographical frontier was closed. Never again will we know the lure of the West. Never again will we know the security provided by the oceans. Never again will we know a land so rich that we need not take thought of the morrow. That romantic epoch is gone beyond recovery.

As we look about this land today we are reminded of the parable of the prodigal son. Our heritage from nature is not what it was when the first settlers landed on the Atlantic coast. We have wasted much of our substance in careless, if not riotous, living. We have burned and slashed our forests; we have mined our

rich soils of much of their fertility; we have skimmed the cream from our mineral reserves; we have marred the beauties of nature in a thousand ways. Yet America remains today a marvellously rich and beautiful land, a land capable of sustaining a great civilization for ages to come. But we need to realize that its riches are not exhaustless. We need to realize that this land, and probably this land alone, belongs to our children for century on century, that this land, and probably this land alone, must provide the geographical base of our civilization forever.

## IV

### AMERICAN CIVILIZATION—OUR NEW FRONTIERS

#### I

TOWARD A NEW CIVILIZATION. During the past generation the American people have been losing some of their traditional optimism. They have even become uncertain regarding their destiny and anxious about their future. They have seen so many things happen that, according to their basic assumptions, should not or could not happen. They saw their noble crusade to make the world safe for democracy a quarter of a century ago turn to dust and ashes. They saw the rise of powerful revolutionary movements that ridiculed and mocked precious rights for which their fathers and mothers had given their blood and tears. They saw peoples who had tasted political liberty overthrow free institutions and accept the slavery of dictatorship. They saw their own economy go into a deep crisis from which, in spite of heroic

measures, they were unable fully to rescue themselves. With millions of unemployed and with a "youth problem" on their hands they naturally began to wonder whether America was still the fabled land of opportunity.

The fact is that we, along with the rest of the world, are in deep crisis. Our institutions and relationships, both domestic and international, are out of joint. Our practical inventiveness has far outrun our moral sense and social organization. We have one foot in a civilization that is passing away, the other in a civilization that is only beginning to take form.

The peoples of the world today are leaving behind the material forms and agencies of a civilization which in its broad contours has endured for many, many centuries. It was a civilization based on agriculture, animal breeding, handicraft, simple trade, and human energy—a civilization that in its many variants dates practically from the beginning of recorded history. The civilization which our fathers brought to this continent and molded into a special pattern during the first two centuries of our history was one of those variants.

We can see clearly that during the last several generations this early civilization of ours has been in process of transition. Today its material foundations are only a memory. Gone are the simple tools with



which the farmer or the artisan tilled the soil, fashioned his garments, made his utensils, and erected his houses and barns. Gone are the great distances, the dirt roads and trails, the rude carts and sledges, the rafts, flatboats, and sailing ships. Gone are the self-contained rural households and closely knit neighborhoods. Gone also in relative measure are the oxen, horses, and waterwheels, the long days and years of unrelieved human toil. Gone too in like measure are the local markets, the little stores and shops with their limited wares and services.

A new civilization is rising in our country and throughout the world—a civilization that, because of its reliance on mechanical means, is coming to be called industrial. With this new civilization we are very closely identified. In no small degree it is a product of American genius and is perhaps further on its course here than in any other land. The fact must be emphasized, however, that in spite of the common reference to the “industrial revolution” as something that took place in England in the eighteenth century and in other countries at later times, industrial *civilization* is still in its early stages. What it will be like when fully matured, we do not and cannot know. That it will assume different forms in different societies, among peoples of diverse cultures, seems entirely probable. Certain of its imperatives and

potentialities we can already see with some clarity. But we may be sure that in the course of the generations it will bring many surprises, many challenges, many perils, many opportunities to mankind. In the following pages its major features, as they appear today, will be briefly outlined.

2

INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION RELEASES SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. Science has rightly been called the most powerful force moving in the modern world. As a method of inquiry it is man's most reliable source of knowledge about both the world and himself. Scornful alike of sacred tradition and temporal authority, it has moved triumphantly during the past four and a half centuries from conquest to conquest. Beginning its great career in the sphere of astronomy, it has left its mark on every field of thought. It has penetrated to some degree all departments of life and overthrown innumerable ideas and customs hallowed by time.

The most distinctive and profound characteristic of industrial civilization is its attitude toward science. Although there is no place in the world today where the advance of science in certain fields is not blocked by fear or vested rights, our contemporary civiliza-

tion is the first civilization in history that has released scientific inquiry on a large scale and made use of its findings. In its turn, of course, science has reacted upon civilization and molded with great power man's ways of life and his outlook upon the world. In its practical aspects, in its application to the ways and technics of life, it is coming to be called technology. It is for this reason that many have spoken of industrial civilization as the product of science.

To the ordinary citizen the advance of technology is perhaps the most striking feature of the age. Indeed, during recent generations a veritable technological revolution has swept over a large part of the earth. This revolution is revealed in the many changes in our civilization to be listed in the remaining pages of this chapter. It is revealed in its most obvious and spectacular form in the march of mechanical invention. It is revealed more profoundly in the steady advance of practical knowledge in almost every field. The source and symbol of this revolution is the scientific laboratory. Here is one of the strangest institutions of history—an institution that is devoted solely to the advance of knowledge and discovery, an institution that at the opening of the present century scarcely existed outside the walls of our great universities, an institution that today is numbered in thousands.

INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION BRINGS NEW MODES OF LIVELIHOOD. The ways by which our people make their living have been transformed since the days of Jefferson and Jackson. Perhaps the most obvious change has been the displacement of the hand tool by the power-driven machine. So overwhelming and impressive has been this trend that our age has commonly been called the machine age; and a great anthropologist has included the machine among the three distinctive elements of American culture. Our people have become so enraptured by this novelty that they have even been inclined to reduce the idea of progress to mechanical advance.

The development of the machine as an instrument of production has affected our modes of livelihood at almost every point. In many cases it has made of the workman a machine tender. Also it has changed profoundly the relation between human labor and capital goods. In our old agrarian economy a man could put himself to work or be put to work with an astonishingly small expenditure for tools of production. A few dollars would often be sufficient. Now, to put this same man to work requires in some industries an investment of thousands of dollars. Production has become a vast, complicated, and costly machine

process. To train an individual to take his place as an efficient worker in this process frequently requires a large expenditure of time, energy, and money.

The rise of the machine has been accompanied by a revolutionary change in the status of the workman and in the distribution of economic power. For the most part the individual does not and cannot, as an individual, own the tools of production. Only in relatively rare cases, outside of agriculture, does he even share in the ownership. As a consequence, the great-grandson of the independent farmer of hallowed tradition may find himself today beholden to some owner or manager of capital for the opportunity of earning a living for himself and his family. At the same time we see a trend down through the decades toward the concentration of productive property in fewer and fewer hands. Those rights to the ownership of land and the tools of production which the common man established are exercised today by only fifteen or twenty per cent of our people. The old economic foundations of American democracy have been largely destroyed.

The machine has also brought a great increase in the scale of operations. This in turn has generated a powerful tendency toward occupational differentiation and coordination which has led to striking advances in productive efficiency. Thus was created a demand

for the ever widening market which was made possible by the steady and radical improvement of the means of communication and transportation. Out of this process of interaction between the differentiation of occupations and the growth of the market came in time the principle of interchangeable parts and mass production. While all of these developments resulted in greatly increased efficiency, they also tended to regiment the workman. Now he is not only required to begin and end his day by the clock; he is also expected to become an appendage of the machine, adjusting his pace to its speed and rhythms. The transformation of the independent farmer into an operative in a mass-production plant is one of the most revolutionary changes of our history. The problem thus created of giving to the common man, the working man, a sense of social status and dignity is one of the major problems of our democracy. It goes to the root of much of the popular unrest of our time.

The economies achieved by machine production are altering profoundly the traditional pattern and conception of our economy. Although we have always defined an economy as a mechanism for the production of goods *and* services, we have commonly assumed that the production of services is quite a secondary matter. In other words, we have assumed that

the really serious purpose of an economy is to produce material things—food, clothing, houses, tools, stoves, automobiles, and radio sets. This inherited conception of an economy is rapidly becoming outmoded. As a matter of fact, we can scarcely hope to achieve stability in the economy without subjecting its proportions to radical revision. With the increase in the power of the machine, the spread of the machine from one field to another, the development of electronics, and the emergence of automatic processes and even factories, the percentage of our people engaged in the production of material things has already shown a marked decline. That this decline will continue in the years ahead, and perhaps at an accelerated pace, seems certain. If we are to find employment for all, therefore, many more of us than heretofore will have to move into the service occupations—into the fields of health, education, science, recreation, entertainment, and all the arts for the enrichment and refinement of personal and community life.

The large-scale enterprise characteristic of industrial economy has favored and even made necessary the development of a new science and a new profession—the science and profession of management. The complex and far-flung undertakings of our economy, with their highly technical and intricate operations and their hundreds and thousands of personnel, do

not run themselves. Nor can they be run efficiently by persons without special experience and training who acquire title to them by purchase, inheritance, or stock manipulation. Into their successful conduct must go the ability to comprehend the given enterprise in all of its relations, the ability to appraise the contributions of the various branches of technology, the ability to deal effectively and democratically with people, the ability to co-ordinate a great variety of activities, and the ability to guide the formulation of short- and long-term plans and policies with some regard for the public interest. The conduct of the enormous military and economic operations of the present war is a striking demonstration of the emergence of this new science. Special proficiency in its practice and general understanding of its worth must characterize democracy in the industrial age.

#### 4

INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION ENLARGES THE SCOPE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACTION. In our pre-industrial society the world in which men actually lived and conducted their affairs was exceedingly small. In very considerable measure it was the rural neighborhood or local community—a world in which most of the relationships among people were personal, inti-



mate, and enduring. The government at Washington, to say nothing of the governments of Europe and Asia, was very far away. The functions of that government, moreover, were so limited that its actions affected but little the everyday life of the ordinary citizen.

The invention and spread of new modes of communication and transportation, the invention and widespread use of the locomotive, the steamship, the automobile and the airplane, of the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, the movie and television, have projected us all into a new and strange age. These powerful engines of space have already destroyed the material foundations of much of our old life and institutions. Here at home in America they have loosened family ties, obliterated the boundaries of local communities, reduced the functional meaning of state lines, and all but joined the Atlantic and the Pacific. They have placed New York and San Francisco, Seattle and Miami, side by side and have brought Washington into every farmhouse. In some respects they have reduced the whole of America to the dimensions of the rural neighborhood of a few generations ago. They have bound us all closely into a single national community of almost incomprehensible complexity and intricacy in which our relationships with one another are often impersonal and

fleeting while our fortunes are intimately and lastingly linked together.

In the world these miracles of science and technology have closed a great cycle that began in the Garden of Eden. From that fabled garden in which he first ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge man slowly spread over the face of the earth. As he increased in numbers and mastered the primitive arts of locomotion he surmounted one after another the barriers of nature. Painfully and at great hazard, he crossed plains and deserts, forests and jungles, ridges and mountains, rivers, lakes and oceans, and ultimately came to occupy most of the land surface of the earth. In this process of migration little groups, separated from one another by vast distances and natural obstacles, gradually formed the diverse races and varieties of the human species. Thus for a period embracing thousands upon thousands of years the inhabited earth became ever larger. Now for several centuries a reverse process has been in operation. With the advance of invention in the sphere of communication and transportation the earth has been growing smaller and smaller. Today we are almost back to the little garden in which man began his earthly adventure, with of course a difference. The many races and peoples, formed during the long period of migration and settlement, must learn to live together

on this greatly shrunken planet. Prosperity and depression, freedom and despotism, war and peace have become practically world-wide in their reaches.

The society which these new agencies of communication and transportation have made possible in America is one of unprecedented complexity and intricacy. No locality or region, no class or group, stands or can stand alone. Except for certain small parasitical elements, which in time will be put to work, they are all bound together in one great community, in one great system of mutual aid, each dependent on and serving the others. This vast system of social relationships, moreover, seems to be extremely sensitive and unstable. Unlike our old agrarian society, with its many independent and quasi-independent neighborhoods, our society today is vulnerable as a whole. If it fails to function in any one of its innumerable parts, it may pass into a condition of general paralysis or crisis. This seems to be what happens when we experience a great economic depression, with its closing of plants, its failure of banks, its liquidation of savings, and its unemployment of millions. As yet we have devised no adequate means to operate successfully our complex and intricate industrial economy. It apparently does not operate itself at a high level of stable productivity.

Any suggestion that some form of general planning

and direction be provided is usually met with the dictum that we must preserve at all costs our economic individualism. As a matter of fact our economy can no longer be characterized as preponderantly individualistic. The organized economic group, bent on the promotion of the interests of its members, is one of the most obvious features of our society today. The corporation, which we have had with us since colonial days and which is now our dominant form of economic organization, may be private in a limited sense but it is not individualistic enterprise. We have our powerful associations of employers: the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Bankers' Association, and others. We also have our powerful unions of industrial working people: the Railway Brotherhoods, the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and others. In the field of agriculture we have the Grange, the Farm Bureau, and the Farmers' Union. Many of the professions are well organized and many white-collar workers are forming unions. Consumers, in increasing numbers, are forming co-operative undertakings. These organizations are among the stubborn realities of our society. No one of them is devoted to economic individualism and the free market. Each does what it can to swing the forces of the market in its favor.

The fact is that the so-called automatic controls of the free market no longer exist generally in our economy. Also our experience with depressions demonstrates that whatever controls we have had, except during the present war, have been inadequate to keep our economy on an even keel and at a high level of production. Some measure of general planning, direction, and co-ordination is clearly necessary. Whether this can or should be achieved by a far-reaching national fiscal policy, by the direct assumption on the part of Congress of the responsibility for planning, by the creation of some special organ of the federal government to do the job, by the socialization of certain strategically situated branches of the economy, by the establishment of some great council representative of functional groups, by the encouragement of the co-operative movement, or by some combination of these and other proposals, should be the subject of debate and experiment.

To those who say that general economic planning or co-ordination of any kind is certain to end in totalitarianism there is a simple rejoinder. If we cannot find an effective substitute for assumed, but mythical, automatic controls and at the same time preserve our essential liberties, then there is no hope for free society in the emerging age. We cannot expect even our democracy, strong as it is, to survive many de-

pressions equal in depth and scope to the one beginning in 1929. Those of us who love freedom should have learned during the last twenty-five years that men generally do not prize political liberty above all else. If they are forced to choose between liberty and bread, they will take bread, or perhaps even the promise of bread. Our democracy must find a way of uniting economic stability with political liberty.

This brings the analysis to the most difficult problem that the advance of industrial civilization has thrust upon us. If we are to plan, some agreement on purposes is imperative. How far such agreement is possible, or how far it should go, is a question that can be answered only through experience. We know that it must go far enough to prevent unemployment and economic crises. The same reasoning obviously applies with equal force to the organization of peace in the world. If the United Nations cannot agree upon and remain loyal to the requisite purposes, they cannot achieve even a fairly durable peace. It is in this area of purposes that the totalitarian state has a great advantage over free society. Dictatorship can force its will upon the people; free society must rely on the slow process of education and political discussion to achieve a common mind. Here is one of the greatest challenges confronting our democracy in these troubled and critical times.

INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION OPENS UP NEW VISTAS OF POWER. All civilizations of the past have been alike in one vital respect. They have rested almost wholly or largely on the energy of man. Whether it was for the tilling of the soil, the fabrication of goods, the building of cities, the transportation of commodities or persons, the waging of war, or the making of life pleasant and gracious for a privileged order, their chief reliance was on human muscle. Everywhere and in all times, except perhaps in a few tiny spots specially favored by nature, civilization has been supported by the bitter and unremitting toil of men, women and children.

Industrial civilization has given to man a new equation of power. This is revealed most fully in our own economy. At the time of the founding of our republic, through the harnessing of wind and waterfall, horses and oxen, we had perhaps doubled the power at the disposal of primeval man. Today, human energy constitutes but the most insignificant fraction of the total power of our civilization. In the form of steam, combustion, and electrical engines and motors, we, one hundred and thirty-five million Americans, have working for us today the equivalent of forty billion human slaves. The figure is perfectly fan-

tastic. But our performance in the present war is also fantastic. Within three years, as more than ten million of our most vigorous young workers were being drawn into the military services, we increased our industrial productive facilities by nearly one half and achieved a total national income practically double that of the best peace-time years. In 1944 we reached a level of industrial production not far below that of all the rest of the world combined. We should note also that advances in physics and chemistry have already enabled us to make many new substances and materials and may in time enable us to create any substance or material that we can imagine and unlock new sources of power that beggar the imagination. When our productive energies are fully released and harnessed, when our knowledge is fully utilized, we can perform miracles. There is no rational justification for poverty and economic insecurity in industrial America.

The power of industrial civilization has also been revealed in the waging of war. Science and technology have created mighty engines of death that dwarf into insignificance anything and everything that has gone before. They have made war so total in its embrace, so devastating in its impact, so terrifying in its horror that civilization itself, not in just one country but in all, is in gravest peril. If war is permitted to continue



in this little world, the time is almost certain to come when some one nation, exalting the military virtues and guided by a policy of utter and calculated ruthlessness, will subjugate and hold in bondage all the rest. Once having obtained exclusive possession of the means of producing these terrible instruments of warfare, the great chemical, metallurgical, and machine construction industries of the world, a nation of even modest proportions could rule the earth indefinitely and unchallenged. Such diabolical agencies of power must be kept in the hands of those who love justice and are resolved to keep peace. The abolition of war is the most urgent task that industrial civilization has imposed on mankind.

Industrial civilization has given man great power over the entire life process. Through knowledge of the method of human reproduction and through the invention of contraceptives it is now possible to control the birthrate. Through knowledge of diet and hygiene and through the general advance of medical science, combined with ability to maintain an optimum standard of living for all of our people, it is also now possible practically to eliminate physical defects, eliminate most diseases, extend considerably the life span, and achieve a level of physical well-being beyond the fondest hopes of past ages. The new drugs

that have been put to use with such miraculous results during the war period suggest that we are still in the early stages of knowledge in this field. With further developments in the biological sciences the time may not be far distant when man may be able to fashion himself in whatever image may strike his fancy. Given the present level of our ethics we can view such a possibility only with deep misgivings.

Industrial civilization has also given man great power over the human mind. From the standpoint of free society here lies one of the most crucial problems of the age. The new agencies of communication, particularly the press, the movie, and the radio, if properly controlled and employed, may serve to promote enlightenment, understanding, and good will in our country and in the world. Unquestionably they are instruments of tremendous power for the strengthening of our democracy. But we know too, and to our great sorrow, that they may be employed to mock and destroy every good thing on the earth. They may be employed to regiment the mind, propagate class and national hatred, lay the psychological foundations for war, and develop in a people a fanatical belief in its unlimited superiority. And when they are combined with the new engines of warfare and the old methods

of torture we see the power base of the contemporary totalitarian state. As yet our democracy has scarcely sensed the existence of the problem, except in its most superficial aspects.

Thoughtful men must contemplate this power factor of industrial civilization with mixed emotions. On the one hand, it opens to our gaze the glorious possibility of at last realizing that vision of the city of God which the prophets of mankind have held before us down through the ages. On the other hand, we shudder in horror at the very thought that this power might be used to bring in an age of utter savagery and barbarism, an age in which the most terrifying fantasies and nightmares of the race would become realities. Perhaps one may be comforted by the thought that so much of human misery, so much of injustice, so much of man's hatred of man, so much of the bitterness of the long struggle, may be traced to the fact that the great majority of men have always been compelled to live on the very margin of subsistence. Now, if we but have the wisdom, we can make life rich and abundant for all. There should no longer be the slightest rational justification for the continuation of the age-long struggle of classes and nations over bread.

TENSIONS BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW. In conclusion it should be emphasized again that this strange civilization which is sweeping the world is still in its early stages. In certain of its phases it is far more advanced than in others. This fact is doubtless responsible for many of the troubles of the time. It certainly underlies the powerful and disrupting tensions to be observed both within our society and among the nations of the world. Today a great gulf stands between many of the stubborn realities of our industrial civilization and our moral practices, understandings, and outlooks—between our closely integrated economy and our competitive spirit, between our shrunken world and the tradition of isolation, between our knowledge in almost every sphere and our ways of life.

All of us are disturbed, some of us are frightened, by the events of our lifetime. Few of us really feel at home in this new world created by science and technology. Many of us perhaps would prefer to live in a more tranquil age. Indeed we might all say with Hamlet that "the time is out of joint" and wonder why we were ever "born to set it right." From time to time we may cast nostalgic eyes back to the agrarian age of our ancestors when everything seems to have

been serene and secure. That we would like that age, if by some magic we were allowed to enter it, is highly doubtful. But be that as it may, this industrial civilization with its basic patterns, tendencies, and imperatives is here to stay. It is our new frontier and, like its predecessor, full of the strange and the unknown. Also, like its predecessor, it holds limitless possibilities—possibilities for good and evil.

# V

## AMERICAN CIVILIZATION—OUR MORAL COMMITMENTS

### I

VALUES AND CHOICES. We are entering a new age in our history. We are building a new civilization. In its outer aspect and in much of its inner spirit this new civilization will be unlike the civilization of our fathers and mothers. That its full character is fated by impersonal forces, however, is not assumed. Industrial civilization, as we have argued in the preceding chapter, holds within its broad imperatives many possibilities. It is taking and will take different forms in different countries. It will be profoundly influenced everywhere by the history, the heritage, and the geographical setting of the people involved.

The course which industrial civilization follows in any country will depend on the great choices which its people make. These choices in turn will be strongly conditioned by the values, the preferences, the moral

commitments of that people. This is not to say that values do not change, or that industrial civilization will not create values of its own. The contrary is obviously true. Yet at any moment in history a people will be moved for good or ill by the values which it cherishes. It will be in terms of such values, as well as in terms of understanding, that we shall make the great choices of this critical age, and thus shape the character of industrial civilization in America.

In the pages that follow an attempt will be made to outline the deepest moral commitments of our people—commitments which are either in our heritage or in the general character of industrial civilization. That there are other and even contrary commitments in our heritage is true. It would be easily possible to select from our life and history the morality of even the Nazi state with all of its mad pretensions—with its worship of brute power, its contempt of the common man, its cult of authoritarian leadership, its delight in torture and cruelty, its parade of arrogance, its doctrine of race superiority, its idealization of war and bloodshed. All of these ways of feeling, thinking, and acting are in us. Some of us at one time or another have practiced every one of them.

It must be emphasized that the commitments here set down and affirmed are choices. They are not fated by our history or by present conditions. Choice, more-

over, is inescapable in all forms of action. It is the very essence of building a civilization and of framing the education of a people. The commitments listed are believed to correspond for the most part with our professions. They embrace the values for which we have labored and fought in our finest hours. The overwhelming majority of us entertain the hope that they are the things for which America stands before the world and in the judgment of time. When we violate them, as we do, we do not seek to immortalize our acts. On the contrary, we are ashamed of such violations, devise ingenious apologies, strive to forget them, endeavor to blot them from the record. The moral commitments developed in the following pages are written in our history and in our hearts. Also they constitute an interpretation of ourselves which we trust will mold our emerging industrial civilization.

## 2

AMERICA IS COMMITTED TO THE HEBRAIC-CHRISTIAN ETHIC. Historically, our civilization is rooted in the Hebraic-Christian tradition of the Western World. From the standpoint of professed allegiances certain of the ethical ideas of this great tradition are among the oldest and most general com-



mitments of our people. Practically all of us and our ancestors back through many generations were reared in the atmosphere, if not in the institutions, of the Hebraic-Christian faith. That this faith had its origins in earlier civilizations and was profoundly influenced by others is recognized. It is given its pre-eminent place here because it was the medium through which we received many values from the ancient world.

There is no suggestion here that we accept this faith in its totality. It contains within itself many contradictions, and much of it has been outmoded by the advance of knowledge and thought. In terms of theology, moreover, our people are endlessly divided. Those who profess some form of belief in a supernatural power are divided into scores of sects and denominations. In addition there are many who have accepted a completely naturalistic interpretation of the universe. Yet certain elements of the ethics of this faith constitute a basic and essential part of our social creed. That they are not derived exclusively or distinctively from this source is readily admitted. Nevertheless in the minds of our people they are commonly identified with the teachings of the Hebraic-Christian tradition.

The Hebraic-Christian ethic lays the moral foundations of democracy. It proclaims, without qualification, the supreme worth and dignity of the individual

human being. Every man is precious simply because he is a man. Every man is precious also because he is unique, because he is himself and no other. Here then is the source of all values. The development of the individual to his full stature is the purpose and the gauge of human society and relationships. As the founder of Christianity once observed, even the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. So all institutions and social arrangements—industry, state, and church, social, economic, and political systems, religions and moral codes—are to be appraised, accepted or rejected, preserved or modified, as they affect the lives of individual human beings.

This great ethic also lays the moral foundations for peace and good will on earth. It proclaims the sublime principle of the brotherhood, of the equality and essential unity, of the races and peoples of mankind. No nation is superior or inferior to another by reason of its power or its present place in history. No man is superior or inferior to another by reason of the work that he does, the social status of his family, the color of his skin, or even the altar at which he worships. Nor for any reason whatsoever does any man have the right to exploit another, to use another as a means to his ends. All are brothers, sons of the same father, members of one human family. There are no superior castes or races commissioned by God or en-

titled by their own nature to rule and enslave the rest of mankind.

Man is thus conceived as a moral creature living in a moral order. According to this conception, the world is marked by good and evil and man is capable of distinguishing the one from the other. He fulfills his nature, not by living a life of impulse and caprice, or of calculated expediency, or even of sacred ritual, but by striving to make the good prevail. He is admonished to do justice, to help the unfortunate, to show mercy toward the weak, to serve his fellow men, to love his neighbors, to be honest and truthful, to cultivate a humane and gentle spirit. The man who does these things is a good man—the highest and finest expression of the creative process on the earth. Also, however much the individual may be molded by circumstance, he is judged responsible and accountable for his actions. And whatever may be the powers arrayed against him, he is always to be true to his own conscience. The good life is a life disciplined by good purposes and devoted to good deeds.

These ethical insights of the Hebraic-Christian faith are both simple and profound. The teachings and practices which flow from them are of the essence of any good society. Only as we introduce them into the closer relationships of our American community and into the wider relationships of nations can we

hope to build a better world. In the measure that we ignore or violate them we open the door to savagery and barbarism. Whatever may have been their original source or sanction these insights have been thoroughly validated by the long experience of mankind. At no time has their worth and truth been more fully demonstrated than in our own generation. The Nazi philosophy reveals the end to which their general repudiation logically and inevitably leads.

### 3

AMERICA IS COMMITTED TO THE HUMANISTIC SPIRIT. Here is one of the truly liberating forces of history. Stemming from the ancient Greeks, it has played a powerful role in every revolutionary and creative epoch. Its recovery, after having been buried for centuries, helped to bring the Dark Ages to their close and to usher in the modern period. It presided over the Renaissance, stimulated the intellectual awakening in England and France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and permeated the thought of the English and French revolutions. It inspired much of the great literature and art of Europe and contributed mightily to the development of science.

Our indebtedness in America to this great liberating tradition is little understood by the present gen-

eration. At the time of the discovery and settlement of our country the humanistic spirit was moving with power in the Western World. On this side of the Atlantic it helped to break the shackles of feudal authority and kindle the fires of protest, revolt, and revolution. It stirred the minds and shaped the visions of the founders of our republic. It is reflected in many of our great state papers—in the Declaration of Independence, the Federal Constitution, and the Four Freedoms. It is reflected also in our universities, in our conception of liberal education, and in our free intellectual life. It is one of the authentic strands of American civilization.

The humanistic spirit vigorously affirms the principle that man has the power of choice, of building, of making history. It therefore rejects all doctrines of fatalism and mechanistic determinism. It sees man as the great creator, as the architect of his own destiny, as the responsible agent of both his fortunes and his misfortunes. It therefore rejects also all forms of authoritarianism, every species of tyranny over the mind of man, every social system, every class relationship, every ecclesiastical order that cramps or degrades the human spirit. It is the ancient, eternal and uncompromising enemy of totalitarianism. Its vigorous rebirth is urgently needed in the present age.

The humanistic spirit proclaims a militant faith in

human powers. It sees man as a rational being, endowed with the ability to sense and discover the true as well as the good. It exalts in man that divine spark of reason which distinguishes him from the brute and which has enabled him to penetrate increasingly the mysteries of his earthly existence. It promotes all agencies and institutions designed to advance knowledge and understanding, to foster enlightenment and intellectual daring. It guards with unqualified devotion untrammelled inquiry into the substance of all things—into the physical universe, into the human past, into the nature of man and society, into the perspectives of the future. To it the burning of books, the closing of libraries, and the regimentation of the mind constitute a degradation of the powers and a betrayal of the hopes of mankind.

The humanistic spirit also sees man as an aesthetic creature, capable of creating and responding to the beautiful. It sees man's struggle to achieve ever more satisfying aesthetic expression as one of the most lustrous chapters of history. It wages unceasing and relentless warfare on all that is mean and unlovely in both man and his surroundings. It encourages the development of artistic talents and the cultivation of all the arts by which man refines himself, adds meaning to his life, and makes the earth a more pleasing and lovely habitation. It cherishes the distinctive in-

sights and creative gifts of individuals and peoples. It treasures every achievement of the past as a part of our common human heritage which should serve both to delight and to instruct each generation.

This faith in human powers is not an idle and meaningless faith. The humanistic spirit affirms, in spite of the sorrows and tragedies of history, that the story of man's long adventure on the earth is glorious and full of promise. It proclaims today, as stoutly as it did in the eighteenth century, its belief in human progress, in the perfectability of man and institutions. It would even contend that the intervening years have strengthened the belief that man can increasingly surmount his infirmities and become free. It would insist that man, by his own efforts and through a process of self-discipline, may lift himself to an ever higher and finer state of existence. Without this faith the present global war would appear to us, not as tragic, but as an act of fate.

#### 4

AMERICA IS COMMITTED TO THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD. As we have already noted in an earlier chapter, science is the greatest single force moving in and shaping the modern age. Perhaps the most profound expression of the humanistic spirit, it has

marched from victory to victory. No opponent, meeting it in its own domain, has been able to prevail against it. In spite of opposition and persecution from powerful quarters, science has established itself firmly during the past several centuries in all advanced countries. That it will continue on its way in the years and generations ahead must be definitely assumed. The human race, in a sense, has already become parasitic upon it. If science in all of its forms were to be wiped out, the population of the earth would be vastly impoverished and probably reduced by half within a generation.

Science is deeply rooted in America. The conditions of life here, the experimental temper of our people, and the outlook of the founders of the republic were peculiarly favorable to its development, particularly in its more practical aspects. So widely has it permeated our civilization and so impressive have been its triumphs that the very word "science" or "scientific" has come to carry great prestige and authority. Also it has perhaps influenced positively the higher reaches of philosophic thought more profoundly in America than in any other country. This is not to say that science has been welcomed into all spheres of life. The contrary is the case. During these recent years of social upheaval and crisis, some have even professed to trace the troubles of the age to



science and have suggested that a moratorium be declared on scientific inquiry. But such proposals are not to be taken seriously. Science is here to stay.

The commitment to scientific method is a great one, greater by far than most of us realize. It modifies profoundly man's relation to the universe, not only by its discoveries but also by its emphases. In conformity with the spirit of the modern age, it brings this temporal world of time and space and matter into the focus of attention. It makes this world the sphere of its interest and the scene of its operations. It assumes that the study of the world in which man lives, the world of physical nature and human society, is worthy of the greatest talents. It thus tends to turn the human mind away from speculation about and absorption in a world beyond the grave.

In common with the humanistic spirit, science implies man's ability increasingly to master his earthly home and shape his destiny, to perfect both himself and his institutions. It assumes that man must be the source of whatever degree of salvation he is to enjoy in this world, that such salvation is to be gained not by incantations and supplications addressed to supernatural forces but rather by the application of his mind to the correction of error and the unravelling of the mysteries of nature. Science rests on the assumption that precise and dependable knowledge of the world

is desirable, and that it is desirable because it is the source of power, control, and freedom. This power is fully demonstrated in the might of industrial civilization.

Science, however, is far more than knowledge. In its essence it is a method of obtaining knowledge. As a method, moreover, it is by no means wholly novel and strange. It has been defined as the "method of organized and critical common sense"—the kind of sense the farmer and artisan have always used in the successful pursuit of their callings, the kind of sense even the primitive hunter or trapper employed in the capture of his game.

The method of science is not difficult to understand. It begins with an idea or hypothesis which grows out of previous experience, knowledge, and thought. This idea or hypothesis is tested by a process of accurate and adequate observation, without prejudice, of relevant phenomena. In this process of observation the most precise instruments available are employed. Where possible the method of the controlled experiment is used. Eventually the data are assembled and the idea or hypothesis, regardless of the authority of great names or the power of vested interests, stands or falls on the basis of observed and measured fact. The successful use of the method of science requires a rigorous discipline. It requires a mind marked by

precision, experimental temper, and unqualified integrity. Such a mind obviously is badly needed in every sphere of life and endeavor. Indeed the scientific method, if generously conceived, is mind functioning at its most efficient level.

The great conquests of science have confronted mankind with a problem of the most crucial and pressing importance. The very survival of civilization may well be involved. It is the problem of the ends which scientific knowledge is to serve. The present war puts the issue in its most striking and terrifying form. Either man will learn to hold in leash his savage and barbarous appetites, or science will become the servant of those appetites. Perhaps the scientific method, if applied boldly and imaginatively, might serve to illuminate the problem. That method, moreover, could not survive indefinitely the destruction of the moral supports characteristic of a highly civilized society. It can attain full maturity only in a society that values and guards intellectual freedom.

## 5

AMERICA IS COMMITTED TO DEMOCRACY. Every critical age has its watchwords—expressions which seem to symbolize the deepest yearnings of the period. Such a watchword for our time is democracy. This

term is on the lips of the peoples of the world. In fascist and totalitarian circles, whether at home or abroad, it is the subject of contempt and ridicule. Elsewhere there cluster about it the tenderest sentiments and fondest hopes of mankind. Undoubtedly democracy has arrived at the most critical point in its modern career. Either it will move on to new conquests or it will be overwhelmed by some rival conception of man and society. And this means that it will either proceed vigorously to the realization of its professed purposes or be declared at best a beautiful but impractical dream.

The fortunes of democracy are peculiarly linked with the history of our people. Although the term possessed a dubious reputation at the time of the founding of the republic, we gradually came to regard ourselves and to be regarded by others as a democracy. Today we commonly consider the democratic idea as the most distinctive and precious quality of our civilization. While this idea has by no means routed its many opponents, it has taken deep root among us. If we have a social faith, that faith is democracy.

The full meaning of democracy is a proper subject of discussion. It has a long history; it is derived from many sources; it is varied and complex in its historic forms; it is ever in process of change and develop-

ment. Among the ancient Greeks, as the word itself indicates, democracy meant literally "rule by the people." One of our own great interpreters defined it as a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." In origin and substance it has much in common with the three preceding moral commitments. It accepts the conception of the individual of the Hebraic-Christian ethic, the hope and the faith of the humanistic spirit, and the method of science. It seeks to express these values in a system of human relationships, in a framework of social institutions.

Democracy, first of all and most fundamentally, is a society of individual human beings of worth and dignity. It rests upon, as do all truly humane movements and philosophies, this sublime affirmation of the Hebraic-Christian ethic. It sees the individual, however, as possessing value, not only in the eyes of God, but also in the eyes of his fellow men. It repudiates without equivocation the basic doctrine of all despotisms, whether benevolent or tyrannical, that the individual is a means to either power or glory. It rejects the idea that he can fulfill his nature as a hewer of wood and drawer of water for his "betters," as a commodity to be bought and sold on the labor market, as a pawn in the barbarous game of war, as an obedient servant of an authoritarian state, or even as a source of prestige and strength of some ecclesi-

astical order. It sees as its first obligation the organization of its life for the fullest development of the talents of the individual, regardless of class, religion, nationality, or race. Democracy measures its wealth in terms of the qualities of body, mind, and heart of its members.

Democracy, in the second phase, is a society of free men. Like the humanistic spirit, it proclaims a profound faith in human powers. But it goes farther and proclaims its faith in common people—the people who do the work of the world. It declares that in the long run such people are the best judges of their own interests, that they can be trusted with both liberty and power, that, in a word, they can and should rule themselves. As an expression of this faith, democracy establishes a political process through which every individual may participate in shaping the institutions of government, in framing the laws of society, and in formulating the policies, great and small, under which he is to live. It guards with special care the right of all minority groups and dissenting elements, provided they are prepared to work in the democratic spirit and tradition, to express their thoughts and wishes, their hopes, fears, and grievances. It calls for the enforcement of the great guarantees of political liberty—freedom of person, movement, and occupation, freedom of thought, speech, and worship, freedom of

press and radio, freedom of assembly and organization, freedom of agitation and petition. Thus democracy places political power, under the equal administration of just laws and through an appropriate system of representation, squarely and unreservedly in the hands of the people. It is evident, of course, that the wise and effective use of this political process calls for the widest enlightenment and the fullest development of the civic virtues of all the people. We know that an indifferent, ignorant, or corrupt generation can destroy the finest democratic institutions and carry a free people into despotism.

Control of political power, however, crucial as it is, is not the only basis of popular freedom. In our time we have seen democracies overthrown by military force. The development of modern engines of warfare, by removing the power over life and death from the hands of the people, has placed free institutions everywhere in jeopardy. If any element or class in society, even a very small minority, should succeed in gaining control of these great instruments of destruction—machine guns, tanks, and airplanes—it could snuff out the lights of human freedom in a few hours. Industrial civilization in America also, as we have seen, has brought about a great concentration of wealth. This condition makes peculiarly urgent the protection of the individual in his right to work and

to organize into free democratic unions under leaders of his own choice. Without such supports the great majority of the citizens, being without property, would be unable to throw their full weight into the political scales. When these changes in the spheres of military and economic power are linked with the development of the new agencies for molding the mind—the press, the radio, and the movie—we can see that the problem of maintaining popular control of our institutions is far more complex than it was in the days of the agrarian civilization.

Democracy, finally, is a society of equal men. While differences in talent are fully recognized and utilized, it offers to all men equal treatment and consideration. A major purpose of its laws is to guarantee to every man, regardless of class, race, or creed, the rights and liberties, the benefits, privileges, and opportunities of our society and to protect him against the arbitrary acts of mobs, power groups, and even the agencies of government. However glorious a civilization may appear to be, however remarkable may be the accomplishments of an aristocracy, however pleasing and gracious may be the life of a privileged class, however flourishing may be the condition of the arts and sciences, if common people do not share in the good things of a society it cannot be called a democracy. In a democracy social progress is measured primarily in



terms of the improvement of the condition of the many.

A democracy also strives to insure the equal assumption of burdens. The conduct of society, particularly of a free society, requires the discharge of heavy and arduous responsibilities. No class or group should be permitted to shirk these responsibilities. It must be recognized also that the citizen has an economic, as well as a political, obligation. Useful labor, labor of value to society, is the duty as well as the right of the citizen. The very idea of the social parasite is repugnant to democracy. Every form of useful labor, moreover, should receive not only a just economic but also a just social reward. The dignity of work is one of the most distinctive marks of a society of free and equal men.

In the age of industrial civilization democracy must assume new forms. Because of the close integration of life and the vast increase of co-operative and collective action, it must become more social in its emphasis and stress increasingly the general welfare. One of the most urgent and crucial tasks of our free society, therefore, is to develop in the individual devotion to the common good. Also, because of the many critical problems confronting us and the rise of powerful rival philosophies and systems; democracy must become more conscious of itself, more sensitive to its weak-

nesses, more creative in its operations, more militant in both the affirmation and the fulfillment of its faith. Our people, as we have seen, face perhaps the greatest challenge of their history. They can meet this challenge successfully only if they attain the high level of heroism, devotion, and intelligence that attended the founding of the republic.

## 6

AMERICA IS COMMITTED TO WORLD PEACE. The desire for peace is one of the most ancient and persistent longings of mankind. Although military leaders and castes have at times extolled the glories and virtues of war, most peoples have always known and believed that "war is hell." While war has brought wealth to a few, fame to some, and the thrill of fighting in a great cause to many, the vast majority of the people of this world have found that it inevitably brings sorrow, suffering, and tragedy to them.

The desire for peace runs through the history of our people. This is true even though we have engaged in many wars, some of them long and bloody. The so-called peace movement, over a period of a century, has perhaps received greater moral and financial support in our country than in any other. Hatred of war is deeply rooted in our mores. Many of the millions

who left their native lands and migrated to America were moved by the resolve to escape the wars and the war systems of the Old World. In the founding of their republic, moreover, the American people sought to bring war under control through the subordination of the military to the civil authority. We know that war and the perpetual threat of war place in jeopardy all the things we cherish. We know that war is hostile to our great moral commitments—to the Hebraic-Christian ethic, to the humanistic spirit, to the scientific method, and to democracy. We know that it is implacably hostile to the very idea of civilized life.

The rise of industrial civilization has increased immeasurably the urgency of the task of establishing a just and durable peace. It has profoundly altered our geographical relations with the rest of the world. It has greatly shortened all distances, reduced the size of the earth, narrowed the oceans, and brought even the most distant nations to our doorstep. At the same time it has made war so terrifying and destructive that the imagination falters and shudders at the thought of another world war a generation hence. Also it has given to war a total aspect. As no great nation can keep out of the conflict, so no locality or population group within a nation can escape its reach. Men, women, and children all feel increasingly its ruthless

sweep. There are fewer and fewer noncombatants in the wars of our age.

The spread of industrial civilization over the world is also changing the power relations of nations and peoples. During the past generation it has been moving out from its original home in western Europe and North America to the industrially backward and undeveloped parts of the earth. England, France, Germany, and Italy will never again know the overwhelming preponderance of power which they have enjoyed for several centuries. Russia, a great Eurasian empire, still in her industrial infancy, has become the most powerful state of the Old World. America in her sheer industrial might is for the time without a close rival on the earth. The colored peoples are rising everywhere, and the speed of their rise will be determined by their mastery of science and technology. Their great numbers, their physical vigor, and the richness of the natural resources in their possession can only mean that in "God's good time" they will achieve a wholly new status in the world. The little states of western Europe have had their day as arbiters of the destinies of mankind. The power to make decisions among the nations is passing into other hands. These vast and far-reaching changes place upon the American people new and heavy responsibilities.

As the rise of industrial civilization has made urgent the organization of the peace of the world, so it has made achievement of the task possible. The contraction of the earth has been accompanied by the laying of the physical foundations of a world community. In terms of communication the earth is certainly no larger than were the thirteen American states at the time of the formation of the federal union in 1787-90. The new engines of warfare, moreover, if brought into the service of the purposes of peace, could easily perform the policing function required in a world order. Also, for decades now mankind has been thinking about and experimenting with instrumentalities for adjusting differences and maintaining peace among the nations. While such instrumentalities have not been notably successful in dealing with the great issues, they have provided a modicum of experience on which to build. Moreover, if the nations fail to establish a peace based on co-operation, it is quite possible that some totalitarian state may take the job in hand and impose a peace on the world conceived in tyranny and dedicated to the proposition that the races of man are created very unequal. The opportunity of our generation may come again only at the close of a long and savage age of darkness.

OUR VIOLATIONS OF THE MORAL COMMITMENTS. The total achievement of the American people in fulfilling their great commitments, when viewed in the perspective of history, is substantial and impressive. Yet it must be admitted that we have never made a comprehensive and sustained effort to apply them fully to life. We have violated every one of them to a degree long and persistently, some of them grievously and on a vast scale. Altogether too generally and often we have confined their observance to special days and occasions, to particular classes and elements in the population. As a people we have rarely been sensitive to their full implications.

We have excluded the colored peoples, even the descendants of the original inhabitants, from many of the benefits and privileges of our American community. Some of us have practiced and preached "white supremacy" in its purest Nazi form. Our treatment of the Negro should trouble deeply the slumbers of all who profess devotion to democratic or Christian principles. Only less flagrantly, right down through the generations, have we violated our commitments in the case of nationalities of recent immigration. We have even tolerated the growth of prejudice and hatred toward those through whom

we have received our greatest moral and religious conceptions. Many of our people have been made to feel themselves aliens in the land of their birth. We have withheld from millions and millions of children of the less favored social classes their American birth-right to healthy bodies and a decent education. We have allowed poverty and riches to grow up side by side in our democracy. We have been callous to the denial to large sections of our people of civil and political rights guaranteed by our constitution. We have permitted private citizens to take the law into their own hands and engage in mob violence of the most savage character. We have stood by and watched man exploit man, class exploit class. We have tolerated the shameless despoilment for private gain of irreplaceable natural resources. On a wide scale we have subordinated the public welfare to personal and class advantage and privilege. The catalog of our violations of the great moral commitments might be greatly extended.

The fact remains that these commitments constitute a most precious possession and an authentic part of our heritage. Even as we violate them, they disturb our consciences and weaken the supports of our transgressions. Their power over us is expressed in our absurd apologies and defenses. Few of us would want to see them repudiated and their opposites en-

throned in their stead. We all know that they lend to our civilization whatever claim it may have to an honorable and distinguished place in history. We know too that they alone provide the values for guiding the process of rearing our children and of preparing them to make the great choices of their generation.



## VI

### EDUCATION FOR AMERICA IN THE INDUSTRIAL AGE

#### I

THE PROMISE OF AMERICA. Education is one of the serious undertakings of our people. Perhaps more than anything else we do, it represents a considered effort to guard and shape our long future. Into the framing of its purposes, therefore, and the translation of those purposes into a practical program should go our clearest thought and finest hopes. It should express a conception of civilization that embraces the best of our heritage, confronts the revolutionary forces and conditions of the present, and takes into account the vast technical potentialities of the coming age. The analyses and affirmations of the preceding chapters provide the substance for this conception.

At the very heart of our conception of civilization should be a challenging and inspiring interpretation of our history. Such an interpretation is found in the

promise of America as a land of plenty, opportunity, and justice for common men, women, and children. It is this promise that has given unity, power, and meaning to the life of our people. Unfortunately, in these latter days, as our civilization has moved from its base on the soil into the age of the machine, the old hopes have grown dim and lost some of their lustre. To meet the challenge and hazards of the age now opening, the historic promise of our country, a promise that awakened to new life millions around the world, must be revived and re-created. It must be revived and re-created in terms of the new conditions and possibilities produced by the rise of industrial civilization.

If we have the courage and imagination, the promise of America can be reconstituted on a scale far grander than that of its earlier form. In the past it rested on the material foundation of a fabulously rich land that seemed to extend almost without limit toward the west. Today it rests on the material foundation of a fabulously productive industrial economy that may reach with ever increasing power into the future. The achievement of the promise yesterday was primarily a responsibility of individual, family, and neighborhood effort. Its achievement today and tomorrow, because of the close and far-flung interdependence of life, must be conceived largely in social

and even national terms. Its benefits yesterday were fully shared only by certain favorably situated elements of the population. Its benefits today and tomorrow must be shared progressively by all of us, regardless of race, family, religion, or nationality. Its purposes yesterday were largely economic and political in character. Its purposes today and tomorrow must embrace more fully all of our great commitments.

Such an interpretation of our civilization, such a conception of the purpose of America, should evoke to the full the energies of our people. Particularly should it give meaning to the lives of the young and provide a moral equivalent of war. Contrary to a common view, youth are not greatly moved by a mad competition with their fellows for mere material comfort and advancement. They rather crave the opportunity to work together in the achievement of some end that possesses recognized social value. That the continuing struggle to fulfill the historic promise of American life requires great labor, courage, sacrifice, and devotion only increases its appeal to young people. This psychological insight has been grasped by the great leaders of history, including not only the founders of our republic but also, unfortunately, contemporary dictators. To receive from his elders a conception of life that will call forth his fullest efforts

and finest qualities should be the birthright of every American child.

Such a conception should also provide an all-inclusive aim of American education. It would lend significance, not only to the program of the school, but also to the vocation of teaching and to the life of the teacher. The low quality of much of our instruction cannot be traced wholly by any means to an inferior grade of teaching personnel, to any lack in professional skills, or to the low standards of remuneration. It is due in no small part to the prevailing petty conception of the calling. A very large proportion of teachers feel deep down in their hearts that what they are doing is not really important, certainly not as important as running a bank or selling real estate. With a noble conception of the craft, even the routine aspects of teaching would take on life and meaning. The profession today is performing far below its possibilities.

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2

NEW EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS. During the period between the great wars the tremendous power of organized education was clearly demonstrated. This demonstration, however, was not made with any force by the democracies. It was made rather by the totali-

tarian states, notably by Communist Russia and Nazi Germany. The performance of both of these countries in the present conflict derives in considerable measure from their educational conceptions and programs. The performance of Russia, because of her general backwardness a generation ago, is particularly striking. Back of her military might stands a new industrial economy and back of both stands a new education—an education with great power in both its techniques and its purposes.

Some critics contend that the experience of totalitarian states can have no meaning for a democracy. They argue that the power of education in Germany and Russia is due to the fact of dictatorship. Clothed with practically unlimited power and authority, the dictator is able to impose on the educational agencies unity of purpose and singleness of direction. In a democracy, the argument continues, because of its essential nature, because of its regard for freedom and difference, education must always be relatively aimless, dispersive, and even marked by contradictions. This would seem to suggest that a democracy can have no great common purposes. Such a defeatist attitude must be rejected if free societies are to survive in the industrial age. That the purposes of democracy and the methods of achieving them must be profoundly different from those of totalitarianism

is of course not debatable. The time has come for us in America to formulate our common purposes and thus raise our education to its full stature. We must begin to see education as a source of both individual and national strength, as a process of building as well as expressing a great civilization. Only when such a view of rearing the young is elaborated and put into practice will education be able to serve democracy as it has served totalitarian states in our time.

The present age, besides raising our sights generally, is opening up to education a number of new horizons. Most significant of all, perhaps, is the extraordinary productivity of our economy. A greatly enriched and expanded educational program is now clearly possible. If the toiling farmers of a century ago could find the resources to carry the "district school" across the continent, we should be able to give to our children every good thing of body, mind, and heart. Today, probably for the first time in our history, we possess the material means essential to launch and maintain an educational program equal to our professions and our needs. Genuine equality of educational opportunity at an unbelievably high level for all of our children, even including the little boys and girls with colored skins, is easily feasible. Indeed, as we have observed in an earlier chapter, the development of technology is so changing the general pattern

of our economy that we are certain to increase markedly the area of the services. Of these, education is probably the greatest and most productive of human welfare.

Changes in the social order are profoundly altering the processes and agencies of education. Even though we thought it desirable, the young could not be reared and inducted into our society as they were in the agrarian age. In that age the school played a minor, even an insignificant, role in this process. The great educational institutions then were the family, the church, the farm, and the neighborhood. The young acquired the powers, the skills, knowledges, and dispositions, necessary for fairly successful living, in the course of growing up and performing the activities expected at each succeeding age. These old agencies, though still persisting, have declined in either their relative or their absolute influence.

The problem of finding substitutes, as effective for the present age as these agencies were for theirs, is far from solved. Indeed, as yet we have scarcely sensed the problem in its fullness. The school, to be sure, has grown enormously, but too much in isolation from the rest of life. Many other agencies of great possibilities, all relatively new, have appeared. The list is long and certainly should include the following: the press, the library and the museum, the

theater, the moving picture, the radio and television, the railroad, the steamship, the automobile and the airplane, the playground, the gymnasium and the swimming pool, the summer camp and the youth hostel. It should also include clubs, unions, and voluntary associations of the adult community and the shop, the factory, the mine and the varied institutions of industry. The task of fully utilizing and co-ordinating these agencies is tremendous and challenging. Since the school is in a peculiarly favorable position to see the problem as a whole, it should probably assume the role of leadership. Industrial civilization has greatly increased and complicated the job of rearing the young, but it has also created the institutions and the resources through which the job can be done magnificently.

The new civilization also has vastly extended the period of education. Because of the complexity, the scope, and the dynamic quality of industrial society, the need for education, for acquiring new powers, for making adjustments to novel situations continues through practically the whole of life. We may therefore expect the current interest in adult education to grow and assume new forms. The need for a rapid and imaginative development in this area during the years ahead is transparent. The very survival of our democracy may well depend on our success in liqui-



dating our "illiteracy" with respect to the nature of industrial civilization—its basic structure, its imperatives, its dynamics, and its potentialities. The urgency of achieving profound adjustments in conceptions and attitudes inherited from the agrarian society makes dependence on a later generation hazardous. Our free way of life may be lost before the boys and girls of today grow to maturity. Moreover, if these boys and girls are to receive the kind of education they should have, the adults must be wise enough to devise and provide it for them.

The advance in our knowledge and thought about education has disclosed additional horizons. We have reason for believing today that man is more educable than was generally thought to be the case a few generations ago. This applies particularly to the first years of life and to the years of adulthood. The period from birth to entrance into school seems to be extremely important in laying the foundations for all later development. A rich and wise society therefore will not long tolerate the neglect which is largely the lot of little children. Investigation also has shown that the individual does not lose his mental elasticity and ability to learn on becoming twenty-one. He seems to retain these powers in amazing degree until the arrival of old age. Apparently man is well-equipped in his

biological inheritance to adjust himself to life in our dynamic industrial society.

We have also acquired from the school of experience and scientific inquiry a conception of the nature of the child somewhat at variance with that of our fathers. We no longer believe that the child is born in sin, that he is perverse by nature, that his will therefore must "be broken." Likewise we no longer believe that education to be best which is most painful. On the contrary, we know that education on the whole can be a joyous adventure and at the same time achieve 'the kind of discipline required by a free society. But we know too that children differ profoundly from one another, that they cannot all travel the same road to maturity and life's responsibilities, that education in its highest form cannot be conducted on the pattern of the assembly line and mass production. And we have learned one thing more. As the child is not bad by nature, neither is he good. Unquestionably the same child can be made into an ardent Nazi, a devoted Communist, or a good Democrat, depending on the character of his total education. We should rejoice to know that, if we have the desire and the wit, we can rear every American child, whatever the color of his skin or the origin of his family, to be a devoted defender of human freedom and all of the great moral commitments of our people.

EDUCATION FOR INDIVIDUAL MATURITY AND EXCELLENCE. An appropriate conception of education for our industrial society has many aspects. Above all it has both an individual and a social aspect. Although the one cannot be separated from the other and although any attempt to deal with the one will affect the other, it will be helpful to make the initial approach to the problem from the standpoint of the individual. This approach is justified by our moral commitments.

Perhaps the most basic moral commitment of our society, as of all democracies, is the affirmation of the worth and dignity of the individual. In its practical expression this commitment, if it means anything, means the extension to the individual of the opportunity to develop as a human being—to achieve full maturity and the highest standards of excellence of which he is capable. It must mean every individual, not just the individual with blue or brown eyes, or the individual born on this or the other “side of the tracks,” or even the individual with little or great talent. And the point must be emphasized that a democracy, more than any other form of society, requires maturity and excellence of the highest order.

Fine human beings, fine in body, mind, and heart, should be the true fruit of human freedom.

The achievement of maturity and excellence is a long and arduous process. It does not come of itself as a process of inner unfolding. It comes only through a twofold process of guidance and learning in which the cultural heritage plays a central role. Without the ministrations of this heritage, which mankind has accumulated painfully through thousands upon thousands of years, the infant, whatever his so-called "natural" gifts and dispositions, would never rise above the level of the brute. It would not even become human in any appropriate meaning of the term. The quality of the cultural heritage on which the individual is nurtured and by which he is molded is therefore a matter of crucial importance. The differences among persons of different social classes within the same society as well as among persons of different racial and national origins seem to be due largely to differences in the quality of the cultural heritage in which they are reared.

The process of maturing begins at birth, or even at the moment of conception. The pre-natal months and the first years of life, moreover, as we have noted, are critical. The achievement of the initial aim of democratic education means therefore that the best of conditions should surround the individual from

the very beginning of his existence. In order that we may advance toward the removal of the gross inequalities of this early age, we must work for the abolition of material and spiritual poverty, the improvement of home and living conditions, the general development of the nursery school, the establishment of a community nursing service, and the preparation of fathers and mothers, through the utilization of all available means and agencies, to discharge efficiently and wisely the many duties of parenthood. From the standpoint of improving the qualities of our people, it would be very difficult to devise any set of social measures that in the long run would be productive of greater good.

From the standpoint of the individual the process of achieving maturity and excellence is fourfold in character: physical, intellectual, moral, and artistic. Although these four aspects are all interrelated and although the entire process is carried on necessarily in a framework of social relationships and institutions, each will be considered briefly by itself. The remainder of the chapter will be devoted to the social setting.

First of all, the mature individual is a good animal, endowed with bodily vigor, free from physical defect and disease, possessing the strength and energy required to discharge the obligations of work, citizen-

ship, and parenthood and to enjoy to the full all that life has to offer. That we fall far short of the attainment of this goal for the American people is revealed in a small way in the daily experience of all of us and on a national scale in the data obtained in the administration of the Selective Service Act. Yet if we should put to use the knowledge we have today, such a goal would not be too far beyond our reach. Our knowledge only needs to be incorporated into a comprehensive program for the care and education of the individual from birth—a program designed to discover and correct all remediable physical defects, to form proper habits of diet, elimination, work, play, and rest, to train in the use of all forms of medical assistance, to insure the acquisition of a modicum of functional knowledge, and to develop a sense of concern for guarding and promoting the health of the entire American community.

The individual begins to assume human form as he develops his intellectual abilities, his desire to know, his power of reason, "the choicest gift bestowed by heaven." While these abilities may be developed in manifold ways and while they can be developed only through the process of living, their fullest development must always be one of the supreme purposes of organized education in a democracy. Such development, as the history of man and the life of the

individual clearly demonstrate, requires the most complete appropriation in their life relations of certain elements of the culture, certain tools or processes of the mind. Without language, the basic instrument or method of both thought and expression, the individual would never pass beyond the mental level of infancy. The mastery of number, which is language in its most precise form, is indispensable for full intellectual maturity in any complex society and particularly so in an industrial society whose peculiar character derives in considerable measure from the use of mathematics. The spirit and method of science, the most mature and dependable form of thought devised by man, must also be accorded a central role in all education for the future. The fullest possible mastery of these processes of language, number, and scientific method is essential to the achievement of intellectual maturity. Essential also is the acquisition, within the range of his powers, of a knowledge and understanding of himself and his world, the cultivation of a bold inquisitiveness, of a thirst to discover and know the truth.

Physical and intellectual maturity are not enough. By themselves, particularly if narrowly conceived, they may produce not a man but a powerful brute of highest cunning and resourcefulness. To become a

man he must also achieve moral maturity and assume the role of a responsible member of society. He must adjust himself to the world of man and nature and bring his impulses under the discipline of purpose. He must learn to subordinate the smaller to the greater good, the more immediate to the more distant, the individual to the social. In our American society, as subsequent pages will stress, this means building into the life of the young our great moral commitments. But if these commitments are to possess power, they must express individual character marked by the most ancient of virtues—the virtues of prudence, temperance, and fortitude, of integrity, trustworthiness, fairness, charity, and simple kindness. Such are the qualities of the good man in societies of many different types and tendencies. From the standpoint of education for a democracy the problem is one of assisting the young to achieve the desired loyalties through a process of self-discipline. From the earliest years the individual should be encouraged to undertake assignments and projects through which the appropriate qualities of character may be exercised and strengthened. The highest goal toward which education can strive is that of making the learner independent of the teacher. Only when the young reach this point in their development do they



arrive at maturity. The ability to direct oneself and manage one's life in relations with others is the ultimate test of the education of the free man.

Finally, the individual achieves human stature in the fullest sense of the term only as he develops his artistic powers, only as he becomes sensitive to the aesthetic world and brings that world into his life. To be sure, a strong and fully developed body, a fine and fully developed mind, a good and fully developed character are all works of art and things of beauty. Yet a complete education must stress the creative talents and stimulate the imagination of the individual. He must be encouraged, not only to appreciate all that man has sensed and contrived of beauty, but also to go beyond the world of nature to see "the light that never was on land or sea," beyond the world of the useful and instrumental to know that which is good in itself, and beyond the world of wont and custom to explore the realm of the uniquely personal. He must be encouraged to become sensitive to the finer and more subtle nuances of living, to foster the growth of his own individuality, to prize the integrity of his own expression, and to insist on the right "to paint the thing as he sees it." All of this calls for the full use of our heritage in the cultivation of the appreciative and creative powers of the young. In our industrial society, because of its mass char-

acter and its tendency toward regimentation, emphasis on individuality assumes special urgency.

The achievement of individual maturity and excellence, however, must never be conceived as a process in conflict with society. Humanity, as it appears in history, is itself an achievement of human beings living together. The individual is a child of society. Even his unique qualities of mind and character, his protests and rebellions, are derived from the social heritage on, in, and by which he was nurtured. The full measure of the maturity of the individual, moreover, is found in his assumption of all of the responsibilities of adult life—economic, family, civic, and religious. The nature of these responsibilities, of course, varies from society to society and from civilization to civilization. In the pages that follow the social aspect of the process of bringing the individual to maturity and excellence in our American industrial civilization will be elaborated. The process might well be crowned and celebrated for young men and women alike by a year of service to the community.

#### 4

EDUCATION FOR A SOCIETY OF FREE MEN. The individual is not born free. He is born more helpless and dependent than the beasts of field or forest.

Whatever freedom he ever enjoys is a product of a long and difficult process of learning through which he acquires power to control his environment and achieve his own purposes. But freedom is far more than an individual achievement. It is also a social product. Only in a free society can the great masses of men enjoy freedom in its highest form.

Although there is probably a deep longing in the human heart in all times and places for freedom, there have been few free societies in history. Society, like the individual, is not free by nature. Rather is such a society one of the highest and most difficult achievements of mankind, the product of a long historical process involving struggle, thought, and invention, blood, sweat, and tears. Moreover, like every form of excellence, it is always in a precarious state and in danger of decay and dissolution. This is due to the fact that it makes most rigorous demands on energy, virtue, and understanding. One of the great tragedies of history is the fact that again and again men who have won a measure of freedom have in the course of time permitted that freedom to slip from their grasp.

We in America, if we would preserve and strengthen our great heritage of liberty, must recognize clearly the foundations on which a free society rests. We must see above all that it does not auto-

matically reproduce itself from generation to generation, that its fortunes are always in the hands of its members. Only as the necessary qualities of mind and heart are rigorously and successfully cultivated in the young of each generation can it be expected to endure. Unfortunately at no time in our history has this truth been fully and clearly recognized by our people. Never have our educational institutions directed their energies deliberately and imaginatively to the performance of this task.

If our liberties are to be preserved through the difficult years ahead, no time is to be lost. The entire educational program from the earliest years, embracing both the school and other agencies, should be organized and conducted for the purpose of developing in the young the qualities and powers essential to the perpetuation through the years of a society of free men. Such a program would seek to give an understanding of the long historical struggle for human freedom, with particular reference to the experience of our own people. It would give very special attention to the task of conveying to the coming generation a sense of the great price that men have always had to pay for their liberties and the price they must pay to regain liberties once lost. It would strive to arouse in them a sense of how precious are the common liberties which they take for granted. The pro-

gram should also strive to develop an understanding and appreciation of the bill of rights today, of the entire process of political democracy, and of the creative role of minority groups in a free society. At the same time, it should acquaint the young with all significant violations of the principles and guarantees of freedom in America and arouse in them a sense of personal responsibility for the correction of deficiencies and even for the lifting of our conception of freedom to a higher level.

Fundamental to understanding and appreciation is practice. The educational program should be made to embrace not only the narrower field of instruction, but also the whole sphere of human relations—the relations of children to children, of children to teachers, of teachers to teachers, of teachers to administrators, and of the school to the community. Profoundly necessary also is careful training in the processes of democracy and in the exercise of the virtues of honesty, truthfulness, fairness, scientific temper, and concern for the general welfare in the conduct of those processes. The life of the educational institution should be organized to give full opportunity for the development of the habits and attitudes of free men. Out of the program, moreover, should come, in addition to understanding, appreciation, and practical powers, deep devotion and abiding loyalties.

EDUCATION FOR A SOCIETY OF EQUAL MEN. Freedom and equality are the twin supports of our democracy. Together they constitute the essence of the American spirit. If we should lose either, our conception of life would enter a new and revolutionary phase. Moreover, if we should forsake either, the other would be in danger. Certainly a society of free men could not long endure if it became marked by gross and persisting inequalities in basic rights, opportunities, and responsibilities. Likewise, if our civil and political liberties should disappear we would immediately find ourselves in a world of caste, special privilege, and concentrated power.

Equality as a social and moral principle, of course, does not and cannot mean identity of talents, interests, or functions. It means rather that every individual should be treated as a person of unique worth and dignity, that no man should use another as a mere means to his own ends, that brute power in the sphere of human relations should be subjected to moral and legal restraints. It means equality in the exercise of all rights and liberties, in the discharge of all obligations and responsibilities, in the protection of the law and the courts, in opportunity to develop gifts and powers, in access to all occupations and careers. It

means also social recognition of every form of useful labor. •

The principle of equality in America today, as we have seen, is in grave peril. Although there have been some advances in the course of the years, it probably has less vitality in certain spheres in our industrial age than it had in earlier times. The concentration of wealth has tended to create a privileged class and to render the great masses of our people dependent and insecure. The master-servant relationship seems to be returning in America. In addition colored peoples and religious and cultural minorities of recent immigration often suffer under heavy disabilities and feel the blighting hand of prejudice, contempt, hatred, and discrimination. The Nazi doctrine of race superiority is widespread today in democratic America. We deny to a large fraction of our citizens not only the most elementary privileges of citizenship, but also the sacred right of every child to have pride in his people.

The educational program should endeavor to rear the young in the spirit and practice of equality. Boys and girls should learn the story of the endless struggle to destroy the barriers of class and caste and to establish and maintain this great principle in the world. The violations of both its letter and its spirit in America should be fully studied. The life of the

school and other educational agencies should be organized and conducted in accordance with its mandates. Rights, privileges, and duties should be enjoyed or discharged equally by all, regardless of family, race or creed. Particular attention should be given to the breaking down of existing prejudices and hatreds and to the development of tolerance, understanding, and appreciation of differences among religions, nationalities and races. The contributions of all the many peoples composing America and the world to the advance and enrichment of civilization should be stressed. The giving of marks, the making of promotions, the awarding of honors, the election of officers of children's organizations, and the selection of individuals to represent class or school in athletic, scientific, literary, and artistic activities should always be conducted on the basis of fairness and merit. The example set by the school and the teacher is far more important than precept.

## 6

EDUCATION FOR A SOCIETY OF CO-OPERATIVE MEN. The very term "society" implies group life. And group life implies co-operation and mutual aid. The degree of co-operation and mutual aid, however, has varied greatly from society to society and within a



given society from time to time. We are entering a period when these qualities will be required in greater measure and on a larger scale than heretofore.

In the agrarian age of our fathers American society as a whole was a loose aggregation of families and neighborhoods. Although the level of social cohesion and mutuality was high in the family and the neighborhood, it was low in the region and the nation. In the rural community neighbor helped neighbor and co-operative activity was common; but in the country as a whole integration was feeble and national unity was generally required only in the waging of war. Federal and even state government was weak, distant, and almost foreign. The average citizen, moreover, was reared in the tradition, still persisting, that it is far less reprehensible to cheat or steal from the government than to cheat or steal from a private citizen or enterprise. We have a long and deeply rooted heritage of rugged individualism and grievous neglect of the public interest. Individual success, commonly conceived in material terms, has even been the great driving force in the education of the young.

The rise of industrial civilization requires a new morality. This civilization, as we have noted, is marked by interdependence on a vast scale, group and collective action, and government intervention in economy and life. One of the most characteristic pat-

terns of America today, and a pattern that is still spreading rapidly, is the voluntary organization and organized activity of every description—economic, civic, social, and cultural. Of special significance for our purposes here are the consumers' co-operatives and the organizations of management, labor, and agriculture. A second pattern, which has been developing for generations and which has advanced with great power during the last fifteen years, and particularly during the war, is the participation of government, and notably the federal government, in the conduct of the economy. Also social planning on local, state, and national bases seems to be a feature of industrial society. It is safe to say, broadly speaking, that these new patterns of social and political relationships are here to stay and that the achievement of economic stability at a high level of production will require a co-ordinated and co-operative effort on the part of labor, agriculture, management, and government. This in turn will require a morality that is more social, more co-operative, and more public than the morality of the past.

The development of the new morality will depend in considerable measure on the introduction of appropriate emphases into our educational program. The young should become familiar with the entire story of the rise of industrial civilization, the transforma-

tion of old institutions, and the emergence of new ways of life. They should study critically the values and weaknesses of the "system of free enterprise," the dangers and possibilities in collective action, in organizations of working people, in associations of businessmen, in social and economic planning, in government intervention in the economy. They should be encouraged to study and debate freely the many problems which all of these developments have brought. In view of the extraordinary complexity of industrial society, the task of gaining understanding is critical and urgent. No phase of this emerging society should be barred from most searching and sympathetic study by the young of each generation.

It is necessary here, however, as elsewhere, to go beyond the achievement of understanding to the formation of habits and dispositions. The young should receive careful training in co-operative undertaking in organizational work, and in social planning so that they may learn how to conduct all of the associated activities intelligently and in a democratic manner. Special attention must be devoted to the formation of co-operative attitudes. Group and organizational activity can fall easily into a totalitarian and dictatorial mold. Equally crucial is the development of a sense of loyalty to the interests of the total community, as opposed to narrower loyalties to particular group

classes, sections, parties, or factions to which the individual belongs. The evils of bitter partisanship constitute an ever-present danger in industrial society. The educational program should be permeated throughout with a concern for the general welfare. At the higher levels definite provision should be made for systematic training for public and government service.

7

EDUCATION FOR AN ECONOMY OF PLENTY. Our industrial economy holds out to the American people for the first time in history a life of material plenty for all. While the worth of a civilization is not to be measured in material possessions, a truly great civilization requires an adequate and stable material foundation. It is now technically possible to maintain from generation to generation a level of production sufficient to drive from our land poverty, material privation, debasing toil, and economic insecurity. It is also possible to guarantee even to the poorest a life rich in all the good things of the spirit. The idea of course is not new. Many prophets have proclaimed it in the past. And it has been anticipated for several generations by the steady rise of the productivity of labor. Today the possibility is definitely present.

The actual achievement of the goal of plenty, however, still eludes us. The techniques of production are here, but the techniques of distribution are still to come. The latter wait upon the sloughing off of old attitudes and habits, the development of a new mentality among our people, the formation of high resolve and determination, and the making of necessary social inventions. That the inventions, however, would be speedily forthcoming, if the way were clear, may be confidently assumed. We have never experienced great difficulty in making inventions. All of this means that a large educational task lies ahead. We need to devise an educational program that will bring our people abreast of the material world in which they live and that will equip them to solve the many problems involved in building a stable and abundant economy.

This educational program, besides providing for the thorough study of the rise of industrial civilization and the impact of science and technology on our institutions and ways of life, should embrace four major emphases. First, it should bring science, scientific method, and the instruments of precision squarely into the center of our whole educational undertaking. Here is a force that has played a major role in creating the modern world and the strange civilization which is sweeping the earth in our time. Yet we know

less about it, in some of its wider implications, than certain other peoples who entered the scientific age at a later time. Chief attention should be placed, however, not on the mastery of the entire subject matter of science, but rather on method, ways of thought, and the general impact of science on the life and condition of man. Our young should be reared in the spirit of science. They should be led to see that science is the great instrument by which man understands, subdues, and harnesses the forces of nature.

The educational program, secondly, should acquaint the young with the basic patterns of technology, particularly as they affect the source and means of livelihood of our people. The primary object here would be, not to give vocational or pre-vocational training, but rather to convey understanding and shape dispositions. As yet we have failed to develop healthy attitudes toward the power-driven machines, the great factories and production plants from which we increasingly derive our subsistence. This means that we have not incorporated into our civilization these new industrial instruments and processes. Most peoples view with deep regard and even with reverence the source of their livelihood, whether it be the land, the sea, or the forest, the horse, the salmon, or the buffalo. We have permitted, perhaps as a survival from our earlier agrarian life,

the inculcation in the young of a sense of aversion or hostility toward technology, the machine, and the factory—toward the very means of an abundant life.

The time has come to bring the substance of technology fully into the process of rearing the young. We should strive to make boys and girls technology-minded and to encourage them to sense the romance in this new and powerful arm with which man is lifting himself out of privation and transforming the world. We should lead them into the mysteries of energy and the harnessing of energy, of chemistry and the making of new materials, of metallurgy and machine construction, of agriculture and the cultivation of the soil, of communication and transportation, and of the whole process of planning, organizing, and managing production and distribution. We should acquaint them with those forces and conditions that promise so much to them and their children—so much of evil if they fail to understand, so much of good if they can become the master.

Induction into the vocations of this industrial society should constitute a third emphasis of the educational program. The initial task here is to acquaint the young with the vast range of occupational opportunities in industrial society. Only by a systematic survey of the possibilities can the individual find his way among the extraordinary complexities of the

economy. To be sure, as the child grows to maturity he learns a great deal without any organized instruction. But his horizons will be limited by the class into which he is born and by the locality in which his lot is cast. For youth a comprehensive program of vocational training, embracing all the important occupations, should be made available to all. In this process of guidance and training provision should be made for obtaining genuine work experience under the conditions of production for the market. Quite apart from its vocational value, this experience should be recognized as an indispensable element in all education. Serious work, as our life in the agrarian age demonstrates, makes a unique contribution to the moral and social development of the individual. The program throughout should stress the dignity of labor in all its forms and grades and the deep moral meaning of the source and means of livelihood.

Finally, the educational program should recognize the difficulties and hazards attending the effort to achieve an economy of plenty. If we were prepared to make material abundance the overruling purpose of our civilization, the task would be simple. We could adopt the totalitarian way. But while material abundance is extremely important and not to be postponed indefinitely, we have other values which we want to preserve and realize more fully. The ap-



proach to the economic problem therefore should be made within a framework of all the great values we cherish. Particularly must we seek to achieve material abundance and at the same time hold firmly to political liberty, intellectual freedom, and personal dignity and integrity. The young should be made to understand that here perhaps is the most crucial problem confronting our democracy at home.

The educational program outlined above cannot, of course, be conducted wholly in the school. It must involve many other agencies. All the resources of home and neighborhood, personal and institutional, should be utilized. More particularly, the laboratory, the shop, the farm, the mine, and the factory should be at the disposal of those directing and guiding the educational process. In addition the radio, the moving picture, television, excursion, travel, and the camp are indispensable. Only by taking advantage of all the resources of our society will we be able to achieve fully our educational purposes.

## 8

EDUCATION FOR A CIVILIZATION OF BEAUTY AND GRANDEUR. As life is more than bread and raiment, so a great civilization is more than economics. To achieve an economy of plenty is splendid, but to

achieve a civilization of beauty and grandeur is sublime. Indeed, the major purpose of such an economy is to provide the material base for a rich spiritual life for all.

The advance of technology is creating an opportunity for the almost unlimited refinement of our civilization. It has so increased the productivity of labor that the working hours of the average man or woman have already been reduced far below what was thought possible and even "proper" a few generations ago. The time and energy devoted to leisure activities and interests consequently have been greatly increased. This trend will doubtless continue in the decades ahead until some optimum point is reached. The opportunity thus provided for the development of people is one of the greatest challenges of the age. It is to be hoped that the hours away from work will not be employed to cheapen and degrade human character.

For the building of a civilization of great beauty and grandeur we as a people are richly endowed. In generous and unparalleled measure we possess the necessary material resources. Also in a unique sense we are the heirs of the artistic and aesthetic traditions of the Old World, reaching back to the ancient Greeks and even the ancient Chinese. Having descended from most of the cultures and races of the earth, we have

within ourselves the heritage, not only of the English, but also of many other peoples, some possessing an extraordinarily rich experience in the arts. We are fortunate indeed that we have among us the children of Africa, France, Spain, Palestine, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, and many other lands. We have the talent needed to adapt the great artistic and aesthetic traditions of the past to the new materials, processes, possibilities, and life conditions of the industrial age.

In the development of an educational program to serve this interest, it is important to see art as an aspect of civilization. In our democratic society art should serve, not a privileged class, but all of the people. Neither should it be associated unduly in our minds with museums and galleries or with special events and occasions. Rather should it be associated with the whole of life. All things, even the most humble and commonplace, can be marked by grace and beauty. The idea, still commonly held, that there is a necessary conflict between the useful and the beautiful is an inheritance from the aristocratic outlook of an earlier age. The finest art should be expressed in the objects of ordinary use, in the ordering of everyday life, and in the planning and architecture of homes, towns, cities, and regions. Technology and the machine, with the marvelous new materials and processes which they bring, are opening up vast new

possibilities of artistic advance. They should bring nearer the day when aesthetic gains can be measured in terms of raising the level of creation, appreciation, and enjoyment of all the people.

The artistic interest should receive far more attention in our educational program than heretofore. Although we have made substantial advances in the last generation, art has been considered too generally as a separate "subject." It should find expression in the architecture, the grounds, the furnishings, and the entire life of the school. It should mold and inspire the young from the earliest and most formative years. All boys and girls should be given opportunity to develop their powers of appreciation and expression in various spheres of artistic endeavor. Through the many aids now easily available they should be led to acquire, as a precious personal possession, appreciation of great literature, great music, great drama, great painting, great architecture, and great art generally. They should be encouraged to develop their special talents in the most varied fields and to seek out new art forms and insights. Particular attention should be given to the unique resources available in the children of our cultural minorities.

A broad and catholic approach should be made to art in its more common forms. The young should learn something of man's long struggle to achieve

aesthetic expression, to civilize, beautify, and enrich himself, his life, and his surroundings. They should become sensitive to art in all of its aspects—in the commodities and services of daily life, in community undertakings and achievements, in housing and public buildings, in parks and playgrounds, in roads, streets and highways, in town, city and regional planning, in theatre, moving picture, and radio. They should become sensitive to natural beauty and to the need of guarding and enhancing the loveliness of our great land. They should become sensitive also to everything that is cheap, mean, and ugly in our civilization—to our slums of city and country, our unsightly billboards, our polluted rivers, our eroded hills, our burned and slashed forests. They should be stirred to conceive and help to build an American civilization of true beauty and grandeur.

9

EDUCATION FOR AN ENDURING CIVILIZATION. For three centuries we have been building in North America a unique civilization—a civilization dedicated to faith in the common man. We have conquered many hazards, weathered many storms, and survived many mistakes. Although we have rarely fulfilled the highest expectations of our friends, we have generally

discomfitted our foes. The fathers of our country built on solid foundations. That the future is secure, however, is by no means certain. Today, as much of the analysis in the present volume makes plain, we are passing through deeply troubled times. Science and technology have released such revolutionary forces and created such revolutionary life conditions that nothing should be taken for granted.

Our good fortune in the past has not always been of our own making. As a matter of fact, during much of our history we have given little thought to the future. We have rather assumed that a kind and beneficent Providence watches over our destinies and even saves us from our blunders. That such a providence did exist in the form of our rich land and our sheltered position in the world is true. But we need to know that these powerful guardians have now largely forsaken us. The time has clearly arrived when we should face squarely and profoundly the question of the qualities and conditions necessary to make our civilization endure, not just for a few years or decades, but for generations and centuries.

Here is the supreme challenge to American science and scholarship. We have had authoritative investigations of recent social trends and diligent studies without number of our history and of this or that phase of our life and civilization. We should proceed

at once to organize on a comprehensive scale our intellectual resources for the prosecution of a bold and fundamental inquiry into the sources of national health and strength. If our historians, our scientists, our students of society, and our philosophers have nothing significant to say on this question, the layman may well ask what they are good for. It is not too much to hope that they have something very helpful and instructive to tell us. One of the tragedies of our civilization is that we have not learned how to make full use of our scholarship.

Our educational program should be suffused with a consciousness of this problem. First of all, there should be developed in the young a deep and abiding love of, faith in, and devotion to their country. The fact should be recognized, however, that this great end can be achieved, not by an uninspired and unenlightened practice of a formal ritual, but rather by active identification with the task of fulfilling the historic promise of American life. To those who fear that such an emphasis would breed a narrow and bigoted nationalism, the reply may be made that everything depends on the moral ideas embraced by our civilization. The nation is one of the most stubborn realities of our age. It will indubitably be the architect of the proximate future of the world. If an enduring and just peace is to be established on the

earth, the nations loving peace and justice must be its responsible creators and agents. Let us hope that the American people will be one of those nations. There is no necessary conflict between love of country and love of mankind. The issue rests with the actual moral commitments of the country involved.

If the young are to love their country and shape its future, they must have knowledge of its history—of its moments of greatness and its moments of shame and weakness, of its achievements and failures, of its triumphs and defeats, of the troubles it faces today. They should come to know the persons, the men and women, humble as well as great, who have made and are making America, who have framed and are framing our institutions and ideals. Thus they should be led to desire in their turn to labor and sacrifice for the improvement of America and for guarding and fulfilling her finest traditions. Also by books, moving pictures, and extensive travel they should become acquainted with this rich and beautiful land which belongs to them and their children forever.

They should be imbued with a deep sense of responsibility for conserving and developing the resources of their country. They should be taught to think of our natural reserves of soil, forest, water, minerals, and beauty as a great heritage which they are to transmit unimpaired and even enriched to



future generations. They should become sensitive to the importance of developing to the full the richest of all our resources—the talents of the boys and girls, the men and women of the many races, nationalities, and religions comprising our people. Every child, regardless of class, creed, or color, should be regarded as holding within himself something of the destiny of America. A strong, intelligent, and virtuous population is the surest guarantee of the endurance of a civilization.

In so far as our knowledge goes, we should make the young aware of those internal and external conditions which weaken and endanger the life of a civilization. Certainly among such conditions are the concentration of wealth in few hands and the pauperization of the people, the emergence of bitterly contending groups and factions each placing its own immediate interests above the general welfare, the concentration of military power in the hands of a special class proud and arrogant, the corruption of the sources of public information, the decay of social consciousness and social conscience, the exhaustion of natural resources of soil, minerals, timber, and water, military weakness in the face of aggression from abroad, and the inability of a people, because of ignorance, mental sclerosis, or moral infirmity, to adjust to new life conditions. These matters should all be treated

in the educational program with courage, honesty, and a deep sense of devotion and responsibility.

## IO

EDUCATION FOR AN EMERGING WORLD COMMUNITY. The most dangerous threat to the endurance of American civilization in the present age is total war. Unless this terrible scourge is driven from the earth or greatly curbed, neither our civilization nor any other civilization worthy of the name can be expected to endure. Otherwise, with the earth growing ever smaller and the engines of death ever more destructive, war and preparation for war may become the all-absorbing concern of mankind. Also, the enrichment of our civilization through friendly intercourse with other peoples would be rendered impossible. War tends to weaken and destroy the great civilizing conception of a common humanity.

This is not the place to discuss ways and means of achieving lasting peace on the earth. We know that the task is perhaps the most difficult ever faced by the human race and that it will require all the knowledge, wisdom, faith, and good will of which mankind is capable. We know that it will require also the creation of some kind of world organization that will set limits to national sovereignty and bring ade-

quate military force to the support of the peaceful adjustment of differences arising among the nations. The fact is that today we have an emerging world community with precious little law and no government. The smallest state would be torn by civil strife under similar conditions.

Because of our unique power position, we as a people cannot evade responsibility in the situation. Whether we take an active part in any effort to organize peace in the world or withdraw completely from international councils, we shall profoundly affect all decisions and programs, unless we should transport ourselves to some other planet. While neutrality on these issues might be possible for a small nation, it is quite impossible for the most powerful and advanced industrial state on the earth. We therefore need to prepare ourselves for the heavy responsibilities which history has placed on our shoulders.

First of all, we need an educational program that will develop understanding of the major factors involved in the organization of peace. Such a program should seek to give knowledge of those changes which have reduced the size of the earth and brought all races and peoples into close association, those new modes and instruments of warfare which have so increased the horror and tragedy of war, and those

many forces which increasingly are binding the destiny of America with the destinies of the other nations of the world. It should strive to convey a sober and realistic understanding of the origins of war—in the facts of geography, in the distribution of populations and resources, in the instabilities of capitalist economy, in the drives of interest groups, in the exploitation of man by man, in the bitter cleavages and struggles of social classes, in the urge for power of ruthless men and totalitarian movements, in the dialectic of revolution and counter-revolution, in the conflicting philosophies and social systems, the injustices, the tensions, the fears, the hatreds, and the historic ambitions and rivalries among the nations and peoples of the earth. It should make us all sensitive to the stupendous hazards and difficulties attending any effort to achieve a stable and just peace in the world.

Our educational program should equip both young and old to live intelligently on a greatly shrunken planet. It should acquaint them with the present ordering of natural riches over the earth and the new perspectives and relationships arising out of the spread of industrial civilization. It should also acquaint them with the changing power patterns of the world, the shift of the center of power from western Europe, the swift transformation of Russia into a modern indus-

trial state, the emergence of China from her long sleep, and the spirit of unrest and bitter discontent agitating the minds of the colored races of the earth. It should provide for a wide and sympathetic study of the great peoples and cultures of the world, with particular attention to Russia, the Far East, and Latin America. The diversity of our own racial and cultural origins should be utilized as a magnificent resource for the development of international understanding and appreciation. Also our educational program should help us to overcome a severe disability from which we have long suffered. The more gifted among us, in appropriate numbers, will have to master the languages of mankind. This means that at last, for those who have the talent and the interest, language instruction in America must become a serious undertaking.

Finally, the educational program should prepare our people to discharge the political responsibilities associated with membership in the emerging world community. We must become familiar with the efforts of the past several generations to build the institutions of international peace. Then as the new processes and arrangements are established following the present conflict, we must learn to participate effectively in their operation. Most important of all, we must develop a sense of responsibility for creating the neces-

sary institutions and for making them serve the purposes of justice and peace. If we should fail to make substantial progress in this direction, the terrible sacrifices of the war will seem a bitter mockery in the coming years.

It must of course be understood that a world organization capable of maintaining a just peace among the nations is today only a hope. Moreover, any world organization, if it is to be successful, must have the support of popular loyalties and understanding in all the great powers. No one country can move forward to this difficult and hazardous task by itself. We must therefore prepare ourselves for a long and sustained effort. Months, years, and decades will doubtless pass before the hope of today approaches realization. In the meantime, as we strive earnestly and resolutely to realize this hope we must always be ready for the eventuality of war. We should all have learned in our generation that peaceful intentions are not enough. Unless and until overwhelming physical force stands behind the enforcement of peace, no nation, however abhorrent of war, can feel secure. As we move boldly to build our world community, therefore, we must ever be certain that power to guard our civilization rests in our hands.

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. The crowning responsibility of our education is to prepare the young of America to discharge wisely and efficiently their political obligations. Government, because of its monopoly of military force, is the supreme power and court of last resort in society. Moreover, through its own operations and through the institutions which it creates, encourages, or tolerates, it holds in its inclusive embrace the life and fortunes of a people. The great decisions of the coming years, decisions which will affect deeply both our domestic affairs and our relations with other nations, will be either made or permitted to be made by the agencies of government. The performance of many of the tasks outlined or suggested in preceding pages will involve directly or indirectly those agencies. The question of the character and efficiency of our government therefore must be a central concern in all programs for the rearing of the young.

During the years from 1787 to 1790 our people, guided by the long experience of mankind with freedom and tyranny, fashioned and adopted a great political charter under which we have ruled ourselves for more than a century and a half. In the words of

its preamble, the controlling purposes of this charter were "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." Although these grand purposes have by no means been fully realized, the authors of our federal constitution wrought far better than they or their contemporaries knew or surmised.

This charter, with its amendments and judicial interpretations, established among us the principle of democratic constitutional government, of government by law and orderly process, of government of, by, and for the people. On the foundation of guaranteed rights and liberties, it outlined a framework of political institutions, of legislative, judicial, and executive authorities, through which the laws, expressing the considered judgment of the citizens and their chosen representatives, could be enacted, interpreted, administered, and enforced. For the adjustment of differences among groups, sections, and classes it substituted the ballot for the sword and made the will of the majority expressed in law generally supreme over the action of mobs and the ambition of rulers. By making possible the most profound changes in economy, government, and even its own provisions, it created a peaceful alternative to the method of violent



revolution. Election day, focus and symbol of democratic constitutional government, should ever be regarded as a truly "holy day" by our people.

The successful operation of this form of government places the heaviest burdens on the understanding and the virtue of all the people. Laws neither make nor enforce themselves. Likewise the ability to make laws and the disposition to obey them are not an expression of untutored "human nature." Also acceptance of majority decision and respect for minority rights are not a gift of the germ plasm to free society. The entire process of democratic constitutional government requires a long period of carefully guided learning. Only by some fortunate chance can the quality of the laws and their administration rise above the wisdom and the devotion of the citizens. If we should lose the necessary powers of mind and heart, if we should fail to understand the world of our time, if we should cease to share great common loyalties and purposes, if we should become divided into irreconcilable factions and classes, if we should lose faith in the essential justice of our institutions, if we should refuse to accept the verdict of the ballot, if we should grow indifferent to or unskilled in the discharge of our civic responsibilities, if we should grossly degrade the political process by resort to dishonesty, falsehood, and vituperation, democratic con-

stitutional government would enter upon the road to decay and dissolution.

As a people we may well be proud of our record. In spite of many failures and delinquencies we have grown and prospered mightily under our regime of democratic constitutional government. Only once since the founding of the republic has that regime failed to prevent civil war. And our failure on that occasion seems to have been due in part to the fact that the principle of the union of the separate states had not yet been fully accepted or established. The conducting of a hotly contested presidential election in the midst of the present total war, without any effort by the party in power to coerce opinion or intimidate the voters, must have seemed a wholly incredible event to millions living under dictatorship. The spectacle of our people going calmly to the polls on November 7, of our fighting men marking their ballots in the "foxholes" of Europe, Asia, and the islands of the sea, to decide some of the greatest issues of history, doubtless appeared to our friends abroad a bit unwise or even foolish. It certainly made them uneasy. But it must also have conveyed to people everywhere a sense of the confident strength and vitality of our democratic constitutional government.

The record of past and present, however, should not blind us to the dangers lying ahead. Ours is an

age of revolution and counter-revolution, of unparalleled violence and bloodshed, of resurgent dictatorship and authoritarianism. So widespread is the repudiation of constitutional government, so deep and pervasive is the human crisis, so closely knit are the nations of mankind, that the totalitarian way of feeling, thinking, and acting has spread like a malign infection throughout the earth. Moreover, the strains and tensions among classes and peoples, the dislocations and maladjustments of institutions, the fears and anxieties of men and women occasioned by the birth-throes of a new age tend to undermine and weaken those rational faculties on which the conduct of orderly processes rests. Also the strangeness, the infinite complexity, the dynamic quality of a world committed to science and technology place a wholly unprecedented burden on the capacity for understanding of even the most gifted. Only a concerted and sustained effort on the part of all can be expected to carry our form of government safely through the coming years and decades.

Foundational in such an effort is a comprehensive educational program embracing the entire period from birth to maturity and beyond. The process of education, of acquiring the appropriate habits, loyalties, and understandings, cannot begin too early or continue too long. In our highly dynamic society the

citizen can never assume that he has completed his preparation for the discharge of his civic responsibilities. Far more than in earlier ages, eternal vigilance is the price of both liberty and constitutional government.

The first task of education should be the rearing of the young in the habits and dispositions, the attitudes and loyalties of orderly and democratic procedures in the conduct of all group activity. They should learn both to make rules to guide their work and play and to obey the rules they make. At the appropriate age they should be introduced, through the life of the school and other educational agencies, through the many organizations of children and youth, to all the processes and institutions, rights and responsibilities of democratic constitutional government. They should be led to acquire the virtues of honesty, truthfulness, and fairness, the ability to value and judge leadership, to select and depose officers in the conduct of their common affairs. Long before they assume the responsibilities of adult citizenship they should be encouraged to develop interest in the institutions and processes of government in the local community, the state, and the nation. Ceremony and pageantry, artistically commensurate with the great conceptions involved, might well play an important role in the rearing of the young.

The development of comprehensive understanding and appreciation is a second task of education. The young should be led to see democratic constitutional government in the perspectives of both history and the contemporary world. Under the imaginative guidance of teachers, who are both informed and concerned, they should study the great charter with its bill of rights and other amendments and grasp its true meaning and significance in our history. Through a companion study of despotic and tyrannical systems, ancient and modern, they should come to know that the only alternative to democratic constitutional government is rule by brute power and personal caprice, civil war and dictatorship. An appropriate education would prepare the young to shed their blood, if need be, not for the overthrow but for the defense, preservation, and improvement of orderly procedures. It would arouse them to a full, vigorous, and intelligent appreciation of the worth of their heritage of self-government founded on law.

A third task of education, a task of the highest urgency, is the achievement of the widest possible enlightenment on the great issues of government and civilization. There are first the old issues, issues as old as the ancient world, the issues of honesty and efficiency in the conduct of public affairs. There are next the issues that must appear in one form or

another in every free society, the issues set forth in the preamble to the federal constitution. There are also the many issues raised by our great moral commitments and the revolutionary conditions of these days, the issues of freedom and tyranny, of equality and caste, of co-operation and competition, of prosperity and depression, of security and liberty, of beauty and ugliness, of war and peace, of progress and catastrophe. The educational program should be designed to give to the young, in terms of their growing powers, understanding of these and many other issues. Democratic constitutional government is the sole political system whose stability and improvement depend on the steady advance and the general dissemination of knowledge and thought. It gives institutional expression to the faith that only truth can make and keep a people free.

## 12

THE CHALLENGE TO THE TEACHER. The conception of education developed in these pages, which in turn expresses a conception of our civilization, constitutes a challenge to the American teacher and teacher-training institutions. It requires of the teacher far more than the following of a set of prescribed rules and techniques. It even requires of him far

more than a mastery of his specialty and an understanding of the nature of the learner and the learning process. It requires of him also, as a frame and guide for all that he does, a deep understanding of our developing civilization in both its historical and its world setting. It requires finally that he be sensitive to the profound moral implications of his calling—that he strive to express in his own life and work, both as teacher and as citizen, a great conception of American civilization. All training of teachers, all administrative procedures, and all efforts at curriculum construction, if not illuminated and inspired by such a conception, are destined to mediocrity and confusion of purpose.

The American teacher would do well to adopt as his own the pledge framed and signed by his Norwegian brothers and sisters when on April 9, 1942, they defied their German conquerors. Under the threat of torture and death they repudiated the Nazi conception of life and affirmed their own moral commitments in words that will live and enrich the heritage of our profession as long as the love of freedom and justice endures on the earth. They defined the obligations of the teacher to his pupils as follows:

*My duty is not only to give you knowledge.  
I must also teach you to have faith in and to*

*desire earnestly that which is true and right. I therefore will ask you to do nothing that I regard as wrong. Nor will I teach you anything that I regard as false. As in the past, I will let my conscience be my guide. I am confident that I shall then fulfill the wishes of the great majority of the people who have entrusted to me the duties of a teacher.*

These Norwegian teachers refused to evade personal responsibility by bowing to the will of brute power. In simple language they proclaimed their loyalty to both a great conception of education and a great conception of civilization. We in America, without being called upon to face corresponding hazards, can do no better than follow their example. We must prepare to teach to the children of America, by example as well as by precept, that which is true and right. But we can do this with confidence and strength only as we mature a great and noble conception of our civilization. In this, like our Norwegian colleagues, we can be sure that we then shall be fulfilling the wishes of the great majority of our people.













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